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Ten Years and Ten Months  
IN  
LUNATIC ASYLUMS.



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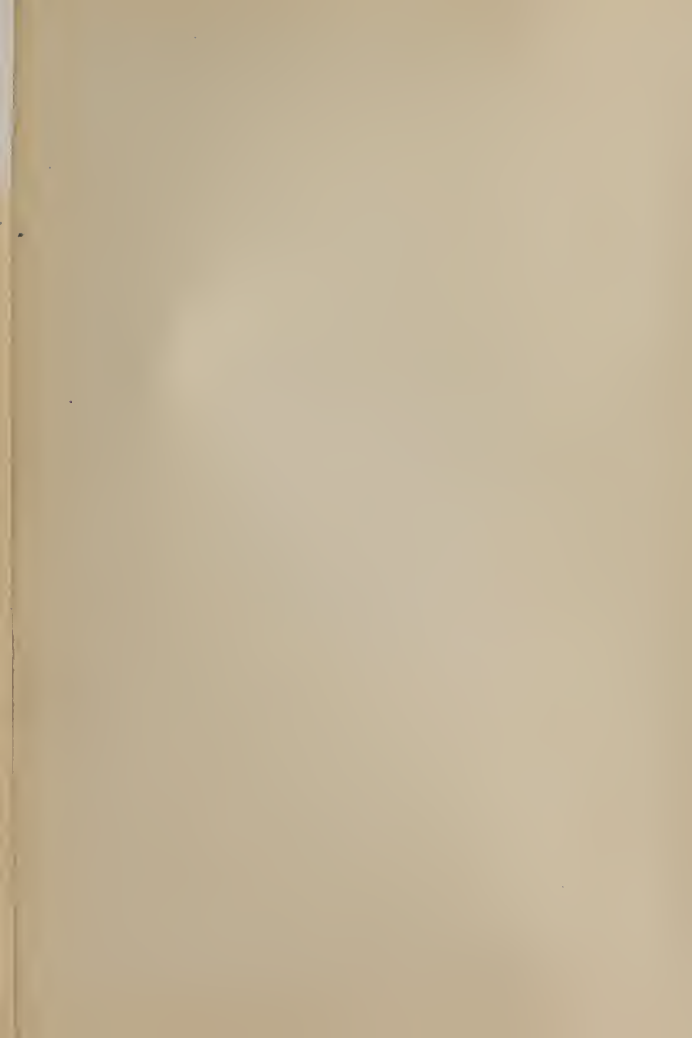


ANNEX

Section .....

Number 321320 .....









TEN YEARS AND TEN MONTHS

IN

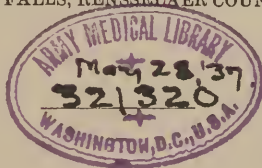
# LUNATIC ASYLUMS

IN DIFFERENT STATES.

BY

MOSES SWAN,

OF HOOSICK FALLS, RENSSELAER COUNTY, N. Y.



HOOSICK FALLS:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1874.

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MOSES SWAN,  
HOOSICK FALLS, N. Y.

## TRANSACTIONS OF A SINGLE DAY.

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But oh! tongue cannot tell or pen describe what I suffered at the hands of the cruel and inhuman male attendant and the equally cruel and barbarous female attendant, whose hearts were calloused and harder than the adamant rock.

But to my story. I was standing alone in the back hall, having just finished washing the breakfast dishes and sweeping the floor (work required of me), when the attendant came through the hall up to me with a pair of handcuffs, which I shall represent by A (see engraving). B represents the leather belt, with a large lock buckle attached to one end. C represents the second strap, same as B. D is the feet straps or bands to bind the feet. E is the muff or great confine for the hands. F is attached to B, D and D, when on a person. As I said, I was standing in the back hall when this male attendant came up to me and ordered me to put on the handcuffs A. I had done nothing to be punished for, and for the *first time* refused to obey him, saying "I can't, I can't." He immediately struck me with the strap and lock buckle B, again and again, making marks upon my left shoulder which I shall carry to my grave; when at last tired of that, he drew his long arm, pounded

me in the face until the blood, running down from my face, stood in pools on the floor. The female attendant, hearing the noise, rushed out of the cross hall with the muff, feet straps and strap C, heretofore spoken of. As she approached us I appealed to her, and kindly asked her to take him away. "Oh, no!" she said, much to my dismay, "I have come to help him." The male attendant now stepped back a little with his fist drawn, ready at any moment to strike me again. The female attendant, a large, muscular woman, who could not have weighed less than two hundred pounds, stepped up and buckled the strap around me so tight that I could scarcely breathe, then stepping behind me took off my coat; she next took up my right foot and placed upon my ankle fetter D, after which she fastened another to my left ankle, (See engraving.) She then buckled strap F into B, which was around my body; she next took cuffs A and put them on my wrists; these have each a staple in one end and a button hole in the other sufficient to receive the staple. She next put on the great muff or hand confine E. It is made of heavy leather, and is some eighteen inches in length, and about fifteen inches in circumference; it opens on the front and at each end, and has a staple in the middle at one end, and a button hole on the other; also staples and button holes at both ends, as seen in the engraving. I did not resist, for I knew it would do no good, though I had been terribly beaten. She

placed this last jacket upon me, drew all the straps tight, and I had on the whole of the accursed harness.

Immediately after this the female attendant proceeded to open the doors and lead the way down two flight of stairs to the bath room. The male attendant took me by the arm and hurried me along after her; there we were met by a patient by the name of E. Scott. I was there ordered into a bath tub of cold water, compelled to sit down, compelled to lie down, bound as I was hand and foot, and chilled through and through; my feet were pressed hard against the foot of the bath tub and my shoulders against the raised bottom of the tub. The water not being of sufficient depth over the raised part of the bottom to cover my head or keep it under water, the attendant took an old tin wash dish, and dipping the water from between my legs poured the dirty water into my mouth and down my throat, keeping my mouth pried open all the while. I begged for my life; I cried for mercy; they would not desist, but again and again filled the dish and poured it down my throat. I was almost strangled, but not yet content, they both grabbed my legs and raised them from the bottom of the tub, thereby drawing my head and shoulders into the deeper water. Then the attendant, by the aid of Scott, held my head under water until I was almost strangled. Whenever I was almost gone they would raise it a moment for me to revive, and then jam it down again under the water. Oh,

fiend! can you tell how one feels in the act of drowning, with no one near to pity. But He, who is everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good, delivered me out of their hands, blessed be his holy name forever and forever. Amen.

It was most unjust; if I was a lunatic it was unjust; if I was not, it was none the less so. Strange, that in a free land, in a thickly settled and civilized community, such barbarous and inhuman acts are allowed by those in authority.

If we can learn, experience and suffer so much in one short hour, what think you I learned, suffered and experienced in *ten long years!*

MOSES SWAN.

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#### RECOMMENDATION.

*First Baptist Church of Hoosick Falls.*

GREETING—This certifies that Brother Moses Swan is a member in our church in good and regular standing, and has been for forty years, and this is given him as a traveling letter.

LEWIS CRANDELL, *Clerk.*

HOOSICK, September 30, 1873.

## PREFACE.

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I have been prompted by my friends and urged by a sense of duty to write the history of the *Ten Years* I spent in *Lunatic Asylums*, and give it to the public. This I proposed to do as soon as I came out, but I dreaded to expose my family to the scorn and reproach that would be cast upon them by my telling the *whole truth*, and when I did conclude to give it to the public, my feeble health prevented me, for a long time, from doing any thing.

I commenced during the last summer to write a full account of *all the terrible acts* that I experienced, saw and heard during those eventful years of sorrow and affliction, hoping that at some future day I might be able to give it to the public.

N. B.—I have prefixed an original engraving to the title page of this little history, descriptive of an act that took place in one of the back halls of the Marshall Infirmary or Lunatic Asylum, Ida Hill, Troy, N. Y.

*This certifies that I was a patient in the above-named institution from March 29, 1860, to October 13, 1870.*

There are several reasons why the author offers to the reader and public in the present form, ten years, ten months and thirteen days of his life while

he was unjustly held in lunatic asylums in different States; and there are many reasons that prompt him to write upon the *cruel* treatment he received from beings with unfeeling hearts and cruel hands, and there are good reasons why he has cause to write upon the treatment of other poor creatures which came under his observation who were confined within those walls up to October 13, 1870.

I herewith give to the public and reader a true statement of facts relative to some of my former life, and ten years, ten months and thirteen days while held in lunatic asylums by bars and bolts. Early in the year of 1859, I found I had overdone and become unable to labor as heretofore. My nervous system had become unstrung; I became somewhat disheartened, and I grew weak in body. My spirits drooped, and I verily thought I should be lost eternally. I became melancholy; the sun, the moon and the stars lost their brilliancy to me, and the sweet music and singing of the birds had lost their charm to me as heretofore; all nature seemed dark and dreary, and, like Job, I said "O, that I had not been." Things that were appeared as though they were not, and things that were not as though they were. At length I closed my business matters as far as in me lay. During the spring and summer of 1859 I was under medical treatment up to August 29. All seemed unavailing. The 29th of August I was persuaded in part and compelled to go to Brattleborough, Vt., Lunatic Asylum to

undergo a course of medical treatment. I was brought home by Brother B. the last of November, nothing better; staid home through the winter with my little family.

Although I had staid four months in this so-called Vermont cure-all institution, I still crossed the green mountain toward my longed-for home in low spirits and sadness. Cheerfulness is natural to the strong and healthy, and despondency and gloom are usually the indirect consequences of some physical ailment. I have been troubled very much from my youth with the dyspepsia, nervousness, and bilious and other ailments. Long before I went to Brattleborough I was thought by Dr. Hall to have the consumption, who said my left lung was gone. Doctors mistake, as well as ministers and people, and I am glad a mistake is not a sin, neither is insanity. Mistakes sometimes arise from the want of knowledge or strength, sometimes from want of watchfulness and care. My great spiritual mistake was this (after having tried to serve the Lord from my youth), I verily thought, these many years of sorrow, I should be finally lost. This mistake arose from over-taxing the body, which became weak, drawing the mind down. I believe the mind is the man; so as man thinketh so is he. If he thinks right, he will act right until the mind changes. We are not our own; we are all bought with a price. I can say there is one who sticketh closer than a brother; and, to-day, I can truly say, as

did the Psalmist, the *Lord* is my shepherd; I shall not want; He maketh me to lie down on green pastures; He restoreth my soul.

I stated in the outset there were many reasons why I undertake this great work.

MY GOD FIRST AND THEN THE PEOPLE.

*Reason* 1. Because I owe a duty to Him who rules and overrules all things.

2. Because I feel it my bounden duty to let the public know that these institutions are robbing some men and women of their liberty, and even of their lives.

3. Because the poor we have always with us, and when we will we may do them good.

4. I hope it may have a tendency to stimulate those who have authority, and the public, to examine these places more critically, that they may ameliorate, if possible, the condition of these unfortunate sufferers, by providing them with attendants or nurses with kind hands and charitable hearts.

With a hopeful prayer that this little history may serve the cause of truth, by enlightening the minds of those who are inquiring after truth, it is dedicated to the candid public by the author.

MOSES SWAN,  
Hoosick Falls, N. Y.

TEN YEARS AND TEN MONTHS  
IN  
LUNATIC ASYLUMS  
IN DIFFERENT STATES,  
BY  
MOSES SWAN,  
WITH SOME REMARKS UPON HIS LIFE AND  
PARENTAGE.

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CHAPTER I.

I, Moses Swan, was born in the town of Hoosick, Rensselaer county, New York, March the 4th, 1812. My father was a native of Tyngsborough, Berkshire county, Massachusetts. My mother was born in Greenfield, Massachusetts, and there lived with her honored parents until my father who being a mechanic, at the age of one and twenty years old, bade his parents good-by and went out into the wide world, like other young men, to seek his fortune, and by the by, as I have often heard him say, he stopped at Greenfield, and worked a few months in the fall, and then and there he became for

the first time acquainted with Abigail Clark, who in the course of time became my mother.

From Greenfield, my father crossed the Green mountain, with his pack upon his back, down into North Adams, and whilst I am writing, methinks I see him trudging along with his Yankee pack upon his back, from Adams along to Williamstown, and by the old brick college and on, and on he travels between the rugged rocks of Pownal, and the little river that winds its way along down to old Hoosick. Here he finds himself at Hoosick Four Corners, a pilgrim and a stranger in a strange land, doubtless tired, but yet he presses onward a little farther, to the west part of the town, to what is called the Cross neighborhood, where he hired his board of Captain Ebenezer Cross; here he set up business, for he was a cooper by trade and a practical farmer; here doubtless he labored with industry and economy, having an eye out for this Greenfield Abigail. And a kind providence smiled upon him, and he returned to Greenfield, in search of Abigail Clark, and they were married.

He was now in his twenty-fourth year. This year he was married to her, who then left her parents' house and came with my father to Hoosick; here, by their industry and economy, they soon saved enough to purchase a small farm, about two miles and a half west of Hoosick Falls, where I was born. I was the third son and the fourth child, one of seven sons and a daughter, which my mother bore to my father.

Here upon the old south-western hill of Hoosick, upon the self-same farm my parents lived and toiled together, until my father fell asleep. I well remember the 27th day of February, 1842, when I stood by my father's dying bedside and smoothed his dying pillow and wiped the cold sweat from his brow, yes, I remember very well of closing his eyes in death. I do not, I can't, I must not wish him back to this lower world of sin and sorrow, of toil and woe, though there be joys in Christ for his children, who walk not according to the course of this world.

While I am writing the foremost part of my little narrative, it will be remembered, that I

am speaking of things far back in the distance, when things of a temporal kind were far inferior to what they now are. Fifty years has made great changes and improvements in arts and sciences in this country ; true it is of Americans as the scripture says, "ye have sought out many inventions."

And while writing, my mind is carried back to my boyhood, some fifty years ago, when I, for the first time, took my father's oxen and went to the field to plow, with one of the best of Pardon Cole's plows. Were I to describe this wonderful plow, and we had its picture, we should judge it more appropriate for a comic almanac than for an agricultural show case. It truly was a huge looking thing, the beam or neap as the Yankee would call it, was made of wood, and the land-side was wood and the mould-board was wood, and then we had a little wooden paddle to paddle off the dirt off the wooden mould-board at every corner when necessary ; and now for the point, it was forged out by a common country blacksmith, one would suppose at the present day it was more fit to iron off a hog's nose than

to be used for a plow-share, in short, it was what the Yankees call a hog plow. Let us compare this with the plows now in use and be thankful for what we have. Well may it be said by the inspired writer, "ye have sought out many inventions."

We might take most of the minor implements of the farmer, and speak at length of the glorious improvements in farming utensils for the last fifty years. But we will speak of but one more of this class, and that is, the wonderful buggy or mowing machine, sweeping through our meadows, drawn by horses where fathers and sons, fifty years ago, sweat with an iron hook in hand to mow down their fields. What an onward march is our world making in the things that are seen which are but temporal that must decay with their usage.

Once more, I well remember when I was some ten or eleven years of age, my parents promised me a visit to Troy for the first time, and I, like most of other country boys, thought much of going to see the great place; the buildings were so thick I could not see

the city, as the saying is. At the time, I had no shoes, and they were difficult to get at that time, for I had first to get the shoemaker's promise and then wait for the fulfillment. I got the promise, and the shoes were to be done the day previous to my going to Troy. I went for the shoes at the appointed time, and behold, I had the shoemaker's promise, for they were not done. And this makes me think of an anecdote which took place between a shoemaker and his wife, the wife says, "What made you promise the lad when you knew you could not fulfill," the husband replies, "It is a poor man that cannot make a promise:" there I was disappointed.

Again we might speak of the many mechanical improvements, such as the housewife's sewing machine, the telegraph, the steam powers and the railways, and many other things of note that we have seen at our town, county and State fairs. But lest I digress too far from the great object I have set forth and have still in view, I will hasten to it.

I feel incompetent for the great work I have undertaken. It always was hard work for me to write out my thoughts or speak before my superiors, and many there are whom I esteem better than myself, yet, however good my neighbors may be, they cannot do my duty nor stand in the judgment for me.

I remember of asking my dear mother, many years ago, how old I was when she took me by the hand and walked along by the side of the wall, and from thence to the old log-house, where lay a young lady asleep in death. Mother informed me that I was then three and a half years old. I speak of this because it was the first person that I saw a corpse, and to show that early impressions upon the tender mind are hard to be eradicated. I have just been speaking of things that transpired in 1816, and, as it is true that one thing leads to another, my mind is called to think of my beloved parents, and the early trainings they gave their children; the beloved words of our Saviour is, "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

At this early day of my life neither of my parents were joined to the Saviour by a public profession; they were eastern people brought up strictly under the Presbyterian order. I am very thankful they taught their children to strictly keep the Sabbath and read the Holy Scriptures, for they are the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentiles, and the Saviour said, "they are they which testify of me."

Old as I am, never have I heard one of my father's family use a word of profane language, so far as I know, not one intemperate drinker. But we are not a family without faults. In early life I became sensible that I was a sinner; when but ten or twelve years of age the spirit of the Lord strove very powerfully with me, and from time to time I grieved its gentle influences from my heart, saying, like Felix, "go thy way for this time," promising, that when I had a more convenient season I would seek the salvation of my soul. I often felt sorry that I was not a Christian, and many a time the tears would

trickle down my cheeks in penitence when but a child.

At this early period of my life, country children did not have the advantages they now have, and it was so even with children living in villages. I was a farmer's son, and I now well remember the shoemaker that came from the east, and whipped the cat, as he called it, then I got my year's stock of shoes, consisting of one pair; if these did not last me till the cat-whipper came around again, I had to go barefoot till he came again, or get the promise for another pair of some other shoemaker, and that was about the same as going barefoot. I well remember this day, in the days of my youth, many a time washing my feet in the cold months of autumn, and my mother oiling them with sweet cream, and putting me to bed. Many a time have I went to the old district school-house to hear Rev. Aaron Haynes preach, when a boy, and that too barefoot. I also remember of once hearing an old Rev. Bennet, who came from Pownal to our school-house, and preached; the text I

do not remember. The prayer he made I cannot reiterate. But I very well remember an anecdote he told, concerning himself, when he was a young man (and methinks he was a little hypocritical at the time). Be that as it may, it appears it was in a time of some excitement, and he said he was away from home on a visit among some of his friends; sitting one evening with his friends, it being nearly time to retire to rest, he says to his friends, "Shall we have a word of prayer before we retire?" "If you please," was the response. And now for the prayer. It was a premeditated prayer, as he said, and he was not a Christian at this time; the prayer he had framed up by his own wisdom and strength, he thought very appropriate and very nice for the occasion; then said he, "I bowed upon my knees to reiterate this nice prayer, and for my life," said he, "I could not recall a single word of it to my mind. I was upon my knees, ashamed, and could not pray my nice prayer. I quickly arose from my knees and ran for bed, leaving my friends to say their own prayers, covering

up my head in bed, with shame, to rest for the night." I would here remark, if any there be who are now feeling they need to pray, come to Jesus and ask him to give you that faith which works by love and purifies the heart, and he will teach you to pray in spirit and in truth, and you will not be ashamed nor confounded. Here one passage of Scripture comes to my mind, and it is this: "Man know thyself." Men are very apt to know their neighbors better in their own estimation than they know themselves. First pull the beam out of thine eye.

Self-examination and the study of human nature is a great work, I think, if I have the right estimate upon them, having studied myself and others, having the Scriptures in my mind more than forty long years, as the scale whereby to discern between right and wrong, truth and error; yet, if the truths of the Scriptures are not sent home upon the heart by the Divine Spirit, they will be like the moon-light upon the cold snow.

I feel thankful to-day that my mother, though long dead, taught me in early life to

read the Scriptures, for they are the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Not only good fathers and mothers teach their children to read the word of God, but our Divine Redeemer says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

## CHAPTER II.

THIS chapter is dedicated to the most essential things of my life, from my boyhood up to my twenty-first birth-day, March 4, 1833.

Sabbath morning, May, I feel thankful that I was not left without parents in my childhood like many little children; I also feel grateful that I had a pious mother, a kind and an affectionate father, to advise and instruct me in the ways of truth and righteousness; I am happy to day because I listened to the sweet counsel of my mother and obeyed the laws of the united head of the God-like pair who have crossed over the river of death.

While I am writing, my mind is carried back to my boyhood and my school days, and child-like plays of innocence, when all seemed like a little paradise below; it gladdens my heart to review those pleasant days of my childhood and call to memory many of my associates, and the little plays and prattles we had together in our innocent days.

But a long time has intervened between those happy and youthful days, and many joys, many sorrows and afflictions, trials, sufferings and disappointments, and even death, has been the lot of many of the little paradise family. Yet there are some who have arrived to man and womanhood, became pious fathers and mothers, and even grandparents, and are now occupying high and important places in the church of Christ and community; these have come up through much tribulation, as says the inspired writer.

In early life my mother taught me to say, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." And when

I came to riper years she taught me to read the Holy Scriptures, and they were they that were the power of God to my salvation, for in early life they were treasured up in my heart; my mother often encouraged me to read the Bible, and particularly on the Sabbath; when I was quite a small boy, she told me if I would read the Bible through by course she would give me a new one. I consequently commenced with all the eagerness of a saint and continued until I had accomplished the great work, though but a child when I commenced, early impressions made upon the tender mind while it is not clogged with the cares of the world are not easily erased from the mind.

Although I was once an innocent child and sat in my mother's lap, and clung to her breast, being encircled in her arms for protection and safety, and had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression and had been dandled in the lap of paradise, yet I was born under the law and in sin did my mother conceive me. I feel to bless the Lord my God and Redeemer to-day that my

parents taught me in early life to read the Scriptures, and in them I found this passage, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." If we are made alive to Christ, then we become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. Who will not sell all for such an inheritance. Oh, young man, young lady! I ask you in the name of my Master, sell all that you have and buy the truth, the pearl of great price, and sell it not.

In early life the spirit of the Lord strove with me, when but a child the tears of penitence would steal down my cheek in my wakeful moments, and I can say as did Paul, "I was *alive* once without the law, but when the *commandments* came, sin revived, and I *died*."

Let us ask the apostle Paul what he means by *life*, by the *commandments*, by *death*. Paul, do you mean by this death, you was unconscious? Oh! now, friends; previous to this death I was persecuting the church

under a mistaken notion, and had a conscience void of offense toward God and man.

Then you mean, Paul, by this death, you was unhappy, and your unhappiness was brought about by the coming of the commandments, and by their being set home upon your heart with reviving energy by the Holy Spirit?

Again, Paul, what do you mean by being alive once without the law? I mean I was without the word of Christ that speaketh better things than that of Abel. I was living under the Jewish dispensation, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and acting under a mistaken faith. I verily thought I was doing God service when I was persecuting the Church. (Paul was mistaken.)

As my father was a mechanic in early life my mind ran in that direction, and as I was a boy of rather feeble constitution, my parents allowed me many hours to myself. I was a sort of errand-boy and kitchen helper to my mother, as she had seven sons and but one daughter. I acquired a knowledge of my father's trade by working in the shop from

time to time, but this did not seem to satisfy my mechanical genius, my mind rather ran to machinery. I made my father's grain cradles and horse rakes before the revolving rake was in use in this country. At one time I made a little trundle-head apple paring machine, and I have often heard remarked, one thing leads to another, and necessity is the mother of invention. As I was the errand-boy I often had to go to the neighbors to borrow fire, as there were no matches in those days. This led me to make a machine of this kind, to produce fire. I cut out a wher from a piece of steel, placed it upon an arbour, gave it a double geer to give it speed, held a flint against it. I then had that which I borrowed and never returned. (Fire.)

Parents often mistake in pointing out the line of business for their children in regard to placing them to trades or professions. It is my opinion, had my father chosen for me the machinists' art, I should not have been a Jack of all trades, and workman at none, as the saying is, although I have often regretted that my parents did not give me

greater opportunity to improve in the arts and sciences, I have no cause to mourn that they did not train me up in the way a young man should go; for in early life they pointed me to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world; and this they did by precepts and by their example.

Dear friends, if I have failed somewhat in literature, and in the arts and sciences, for want of opportunity, I shall not have it to say on the day of judgment, on the great day of accounts, that I had no opportunity to make my calling and election sure, no! no! no!

He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

This is the first doctrine our Emmanuel God taught the eleven after his resurrection.

There is no ifs nor ands about this doctrine. There is a thus saith the Lord for it; and this I believed in my youthful days; although, when moved by the holy spirit, I often said: I am young, time enough yet; and

when I think how many there are called away by death under the age of eighteen years, I feel thankful that God spared me till my nineteenth, September, 1831.

Since I began to write my little history, I have been advised to give it up, by old and young. One young man advised me so to do, that did not know that the Lord's prayer was in the new testament; and like many others could not say it correctly. Now I do not neglect my duty, as I am traveling through this, to another world, stopping to listen to every dog, and beat off every one that barks at me.

Enough has been said in the fore part of this little history to prepare every truthful mind to listen with some interest to the religious experience of the author.

August 29, 1831. Previous to this date the good Lord and Saviour having often called me by the gentle influences of his gracious spirit, now, upon this 29th day of August, 1831, gave me faith sufficient to encourage me to ask him to be my friend and pardon and forgive my sins.

Faith is the gift of God, and without it no man can please the Lord. Faith is brought about to sinful men oftentimes by the moving of the holy spirit which guides into all truth. Whether the faith here given me would be considered by the Christian world a living faith, the faith that works by love and purifies the heart, it was the turning point to better days.

Many days previous to the day herein alluded to my mind had been wrought up to the subject of religion and the necessity of an interest in Christ; my mind was saddened, my joys had fled and my soul was stirred within me, and I exclaimed, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" then I cried unto the Lord and he heard me.

"When thou prayest," is the instruction of our Saviour, "enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door [the heart, the mind, the soul, against all but Jesus] pray to thy Father which seeth in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." There is power in prayer.

Not only is there power in prayer with a wrestling Jacob and a prevailing Israel, but our divine Redeemer manifested his willingness to save the chief of sinners, by answering the prayer of the penitent thief on the cross, by saying "this day thou shalt be with me in paradise." I did not feel that I had been a thief or a robber, but I felt I was a sinner lost forever without the pardoning grace of God. "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find," is the encouragement given to every inquiring sinner by the divine Redeemer. I felt at this time the necessity of prayer, and that of earnest, humble, contrite prayer. I had been taught to say "our Father," but now, for the first time, on the 29th of August, 1831, I retired in secret to pray under the direction of that spirit that guides into all truth. Having thus entered the closet I asked the Lord to have mercy on me a sinner. This was in the evening of the 29th; I arose from my knees, but oh, the darkness that gathered over my mind; I went to my bed but sleep had departed from me; I often knelt in earnest prayer, day

after day I continued knocking at mercy's door, and praying for mercy to Him who is the sinner's friend. One evening I went to the kitchen, when under this tried state, and stood by the south window, in sadness. My mother approached me, raised my hat, and kindly says, "Moses, what is the matter, have you the cholic" (knowing I was subject to it)? "No, mam," said I, turning and looking out of the window and across the valley. I saw a light (but it was from a neighboring window) and oh how brightly it shone, for it was a dark night and had been for many days to my soul, all my troubles subsided and I retired to rest, unconscious for the night, that it was the Lord's work. In the morning I arose, entered my closet, but my prayers were turned to thankful praise to Him who had heard my prayers and I trust took my feet from the horrible pit and miry clay; He put a new song into my mouth, even praise to His name. And I could then say "whereas I was once blind now I see, the things I once loved, I now hate, and the things I once

hated I now love; behold, all things have become new."

The first opportunity presented itself in a religious meeting. I arose and said in so many words, draw near all ye that love the Lord and I will tell you what the Lord has done for my soul.

From this glad hour I continued to entreat and exhort men to be reconciled to God and become the followers of the Saviour, and I rejoiced in God, the rock of my salvation; soon after my happy concession I related the dealings of God with my soul, and was received as a subject of christian baptism, and the 18th day of September, 1831, I was baptised by Rev. I. Keach in the old Hoo-sick river, a few rods above the bridge and falls; two young ladies, by name M. and E. Pierce, were immersed at the same time.

I believe the wicked may forsake their ways through faith in Christ and return unto the Lord who will have mercy upon them, and to our God and he will abundantly pardon.

I believe it is impossible for an impenitent person to be happy while persisting in sin.

I believe the finally impenitent will be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God.

The day I was baptized I marched from the water's brink to the old church, erected 1800, received the right hand of church fellowship and it has never been withdrawn from me.

From this day I went on my way rejoicing, often exhorting, entreating and trying to persuade my young associates to be reconciled to the Saviour.

Still living with my parents, working on the farm during the summer season and with my father in the shop in the fall, all went on pleasantly; thus I lived at home till I arrived at the age of one and twenty years of age, then I bade my parents, brothers and sister, good morning, and left my little paradise home, and went out into the wide and unfeeling world to gain my bread by the sweat of my brow, and to withstand all the temptations of the devil, and the scoffs and sneers of a wicked and gainsaying world.

## CHAPTER III.

At the age of twenty-one I went to an adjoining town and (worked for J. Bracket, at my trade, making barrels at thirty-six cents each, two was allowed to be a day's work, I often made three; paid one dollar and twenty-five cents per week for board), here I lived and toiled nearly three years; when in my twenty-fourth year, I was married to Mary Ann Slade of Hoosick, and finding her just with the key of my safe, I did her intrust. My wife, soon after we were married, joined the church, and in the spring we set up housekeeping in my father's house, and I worked for him at my trade that year, in the spring of 1837, my father gave up the coopering business for a time and I set up the trade for myself in the town of Pittstown. (This year I made 1000 flour barrels, sold them to Van Alstyne & Co., at Melville.)

In the spring of 1838, moved to Hoosick near Potterhill, bought me a team, employed hands and carried on my business more extensively; by our industry, economy within

doors and out, we added a little to our temporal wealth. Still holding our place in the church and attending to the ordinances of the Lord's house, nothing seemed to mar our peace and future prospects. Whilst we were living at this place our pastor visited one day and introduced to me the subject of preaching, and said he thought it was my duty to preach, I told him I had never made up my mind to that effect, but he insisted upon it, saying he would give out an appointment next Wednesday evening at brother Heart Philip's (convert a man against his will, he is the same unbeliever still), I consequently met the appointment, but it was not a self-will duty under the guidance of the holy spirit, and I knew but little better what to do than a thief would in an apothecary shop, I could pray and exhort; I think if I have any spiritual gift it is exhortation and prayer.

A few weeks elapsed and I learned the Church had granted me license voluntarily without my request or knowledge. Now, I felt under obligations to do something, to

go forward was a great work, to disobey the man-made call seemed then almost like denying my Lord, and thus I labored on ; sometimes it seemed I pleased the Lord, sometimes men, and sometimes the devil.

I was also advised by the preacher to suspend my little flourishing trade and go to study which I did, spending some hundred dollars for learning, which was almost impossible for a man of my constitution to obtain, having used all the money I had in my own hands — I could not get what I had loaned (for it was finally lost), I gave up my study and again went to work to support myself and family. Shortly after this my father died, leaving me more cares and difficulties to overcome.

Afflictions, though they seem severe, often work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I felt keenly the loss of my kind father and more than ever I now appreciated the good advice and the beneficial lessons he taught me in his life-time, for they restrained me from outbreking sins and have led me to seek an interest in Christ which

now gave me consolation in this hour of trial and affliction. After the death of my father our family were scattered far and wide, one brother in California, two brothers and a sister in the far west, one gone to his long home to meet our dear parents, while the remaining two and myself are living in our native town.

After the death of my father, which took place in February, 1842, and 27th day, I occupied one of my father's farms, until it was sold. While living upon this farm, in 1843, our only daughter and child was born, and soon after I graduated from my high asylum-school and came home, she was married to Mr. J. H. Tucker, and is now living in the pleasant little village of Hoosick Falls.

I am now living within the sound of the church-going bell in the above-named village, and I can truly say since I have been restored to my family and friends and society, I feel like a bird escaped from the fowler's snare, and I can truly say I have enjoyed life better since my return than in my youthful days. Little do men know how to appreciate

the blessings a bountiful Creator bestows upon them until they are deprived of them.

By this time the reader is aware that I have written to a considerable length upon my former life, bringing to mind many important things that may be of use to the young and rising generation, if reduced to practice, especially the one thing needful that Mary chose, which shall never be taken from her.

May every one that have not as yet chosen Christ and the good part, make up their minds without delay; and may those who have faith that works by love and purifies the heart, continue steadfast unto the end, that they may receive a crown of life and enter into the city through the pearly gates and bask in the sunshine and behold the Saviour's face forever is the prayer of the author.

## CHAPTER IV.

Troy Marshall Infirmary and Lunatic Asylum, Ida Hill, under the direction of a board of Governors. This institution was char-

tered by the Legislature of the State of New York.

John C. Heartt, President ; J. W. Downings, 1st Vice-President ; Thos. Coleman, 2d Vice-President ; R. H. Ward, M. D., Secretary ; George A. Stone, Treasurer.

*Governors.*—Hon. William Kemp, Mayor, Jonas C. Heartt, John P. Albertson, John L. Thompson, Alfred Watkins, M. D., J. W. Freman, John Hitchins, J. W. Downings, S. M. Vail, Lyman Bennett, J. Hobart Warren, Thomas Coleman, Alfonso Bills, Hanford N. Lockwood, George H. Phillips, John Sherry, James Thorn, M. D., J. C. Osgood, M. D., Henry B. Whiton, Charles Eddy, R. H. Ward, M. D., C. W. Tillinghast, E. Thompson Gale, George A. Stone. C. L. Hubbell, M. D.

*Inspectors.*—Calvin Haynes, T. W. Lockwood, H. Warren.

*Committee of Managers.*—Alfonso Bills, J. W. Downing, George H. Phillips, John Sherry, Thomas Coleman.

*Consulting Physicians.*—Dr. Alfred Watkins and Dr. James Thorn.

*Attending Physicians, etc.*—Drs. Henry B. Whiton, R. H. Ward, C. L. Hubbell, G. H. Hubbard.

*Attending Physician and Surgeon.* — Joseph D. Lomax, Resident Medical Superintendent ; E. J. Fisk, M. D., Medical Assistant.

John Harrison, Steward ; Mrs. Harrison, Matron.

*This is one of the popular institutions of the day. Read and shed a sympathizing tear.*

This certifies that I, Moses Swan, of the town of Hoosick and county of Rensselaer and State of New York, was confined by bars and bolts, in the above-named institution, from March 29, 1860, to October 13, 1871.

If I am rightly informed, this institution was chartered by the Legislature of the State of New York for the benefit of unfortunate persons who are actual lunatics, not for a penitentiary or prison-house.

If I am rightly informed by Judge R., the law to get a person into this institution lawfully, against his or her will, two physicians must examine the patient, and make oath that A. or B. is a lunatic or an insane person.

Secondly, these affidavits must be presented to the county judge, and he issues an order to take Mrs. A. or Mrs. B. to the asylum.

Amid all the opposition used to hinder me from this heart-burdened work, I have firmly resolved, by the grace of Him who delivered me from this inhumanly governed institution, to set forth and carry through the press, to the community at large, some of the most prominent transactions that came under my observation. So help me \* \* \* \*

#### MY CAPTURE AND RIDE TO THE ASYLUM.

Early in the morning of March 29, 1860, a posse of strong men surrounded my house, rushed into the hallway, and one into my room of sickness, sorrow and gloom, made no complaint of lawful authority, and ordered me to arise, saying he was going to send me to

the Marshall Asylum by post-coach. Said I, "You had better send me in a box," choosing death rather than go, having been to Brattleborough Asylum four months previous.

No alternative, up drove the post-coach, in came the long-arm driver, F. Tarbal, who captured me and hurled me out of door and into the coach, while daughter clung to me in tears. He seated me by the side of Wm. Kelly, a State prison culprit, who took me by the arm. Extricating myself from him, said I, "You had better go back where you came from." R. Manchester remarked at the time, he don't like Silkworth's man.

No one can imagine the sorrow and anguish that filled my aching heart at this critical moment — one snatched from the bosom of the wife of his early choice, and from the embrace of an affectionate and lovely daughter; and, yea, more than that, I was numbered with transgressors.

And now for the unhappy ride. Snap went the whip, round went the wheels; and never was man so sad, for I can truly say, no

person from this time saw me smile for ten long years.

We rode down the hill a few rods and added an extra horse, making a spike team ; then drove to a Mr. Messers, took his wife and little burnt child aboard ; drove next to H. Wardsworth's ; here I tried to elope, but Vandenburg crowded me back. The die was cast. On and on we went ; halted at Pittstown Four Corners ; next, Raymertown ; here we left the poor pole horse. "How many oats," says the hostler. "Four quarts," says Tarbal. Mail changed now for Haynerville, post-office in shoemaker's shop ; next we halted at Brunswick Center to change mail ; and next we halted in Troy, at the Northern Hotel, for dinner ; but, mind you, I got none ; no, not so much as the law allows a prisoner ; not so much as a cup of cold water.

I very well remember what Tarbal said when we started from the Northern hotel and the reply I made him. "Come, Swan," says he, "let's go home." Said I, "I have no home," and followed him to the coach, when he immediately started off down street, made

a halt at Judge Robertson's office. Says Tarbal to me, "get out and stay here in the post-office until I go down to the boat and get a box for Mrs. Brown." I was told, when a boy, the moon was made of green cheese, but I did not believe it, neither did I believe at the time that Judge Robertson's office was the post-office, although he is now postmaster, in 1874.

Here H. Rowland talked with the judge about receiving me into the asylum, passing papers to the judge and the judge to a boy to go and have recorded. Presently came Tarbal and ordered me into the coach, when N. Harwood, Rowland and myself were aboard, up Ida Hill and over across the stone bridge, we turned to the right and then drove to the asylum, which is situated between the Albia and the Hollow road. Making a halt at the office door we were met by Drs. Gregory and McLean. I was ordered to dismount. I soon found myself sitting in the doctor's office in the Marshall Lunatic Asylum. "Now," says Rowland, "you'll show

us around." "Yes," was the response from the doctor.

After the post-coach and the Pittstown band left I was soon ushered into the back hall with many brute, beast-like creatures, to share the fate of poor Tray caught in bad company. As I entered this hall the first I noticed was John P. Bacon, handcuffed and bound to a stationary chair, on one side of the hall, and on the other, Patrick Mely, in the same way. There were others that I noticed at the time; John Beldon, Charles Barclay. I mention these men to show, by circumstantial evidence, that I was sensible at the time I entered this institution. (I conversed with John P. Bacon the 15th of April, 1874, he was in the upper or incurable house, doing drudgery under attendant William Anderson.) Soon after I was seated in this hall a man approached me, by the name of Smith, whose curly locks hung down his shoulders most beautifully. He said, "I will take your coat and hat." Soon after supper was announced, then I found J. Smith was the attendant on that hall.

Although I had had no dinner I could not relish supper in a prison, for a prison I found it to be. Bedtime came and I was locked up in a cell three doors from the dead-house, on the left, or east, side of the south hall, the window was darkened by a heavy shutter and the door heavily lined on the inside; here I lay, upon a couch of straw or mat-trass, many sleepless nights, listening to the screeches and yells of the inmates; permitted to walk out upon the hall through the daytime with some of the patients whose names I shall now record:

SOME OF THE MAIN HOUSE PATIENTS AND  
ATTENDANTS.

March 29th, 1860, to July 3d, 1862:

*Patients.*—John P. Bacon, Patrick Mely, John Newbanks, John Beldon, William B. Gibbs, Sidney Betts, John Smawly, Capt. Lord, Mr. O'Donnel (destroyed Bible,) Ebenezer Scott, Patrick Fitzgerald, Mr. Babcock (has lame foot), James Bolin, William Lewis, Alfred (the painter). William Anderson

(helper), Isabella Anderson, helper (hanged herself March 16th, 1873).

From March 29th, 1860, to July 3d, 1862, then I was removed to the incurable house :

*Attendants.*—John Smith, Mr. Burr, Geo. Harrison, Charles Harrison, one, name unknown, Mr. Adkins (lunatic barber from Brattleborough asylum), Drs. McLean and Gregory ; John Harrison, steward, Mrs Harrison, matron.

I am now writing a book for sane minds to read and peruse ; and whether you judge the author sane or insane, he prays you may sympathize with the poor unfortunate beings herein mentioned who are still living. Some have gone to their long homes ; and it is through the mercy of God that I am spared to make manifest things that I have seen and heard in this institution, and labor for the good of the poor.

“In a large house are many masters,” so says the Bible.

At the present day lunatic asylums have become very popular ; and it is granted by many that this Ida Hill Institution is well

cared for, having twenty-six governors, and half as many doctors, to overlook, and a committee to inspect, and supervisors to visit. All this may be true. But where are these duty-bound men? One in the National Bank; another in the mayor's office; another in his flour store; another galloping through the city to attend to his own medical practice. All these are troubled about many things—the supervisors have their home cares also. These are governors without.

#### WHO GOVERNS THE INMATES?

But, says one, who governed these patients you have named within? This I can answer readily, though I had to learn it. Brattleborough and the Marshall institutions were high schools to teach human nature to me. I was on one of the halls of the Brattleborough asylum with thirty-seven patients, where blood was often shed; upon this hall was a patient by the name of Adkins, here I thought my attendants were lunatics, did not certainly know. But soon after I got into the Marshall institution, this same patient, Adkins, became attendant over me, I

shall call him the Brattleborough lunatic barber, for he often ordered me into the shaving room and shaved me, and my Lord I was afraid to be shaved by a lunatic barber in a room alone, no alternative, be shaved I must. And when I was taken to the incurable house, Alfred and Thomas Haly, formerly patients, whom I shall speak of in future pages, became my attendants. These men had been self-abused; Alfred was a drunkard; the others were something else — they also knew how to abuse others; give such low, degraded men the keys, and a little authority, and their word is law, and they are lord of all. Such men govern within.

After suffering more than ten years in this institution, I graduated on the 13th day of October, 1870. If any one thinks that I have not got my diploma, please look at the accursed harness in the engraving that I bought in 1873 of Mr. Hogan of River street, Troy, similar to the accursed ones used in the Marshall Crazy House, to bind poor unfortunate men and women with, and then torture and strangle them. I have read of

our Saviour casting out devils in kindness, and I have read of the devil being bound in everlasting chains, but it never came into my mind that such barbarous acts were practiced in these institutions, until I saw them with my own eyes and experienced to my sorrow.

I am governor of my own house, but if I do not rule it well, I shall be awfully accountable on the day of judgment. And I fear those twenty-six governors, doctors and inspectors, and all who have any thing to do in holding men and women in slavery in this institution will have a dread account to give at the judgment day.

March 29, 1860. After I had lodged in this dead-house hell many lonely nights, I made up my mind that I was considered a bad man by all who knew me, yet I was childlike and innocent. I had more than uncommon watch-care, for I greatly feared to do any thing wrong. Here I used much discretion and caution, shunning the paths of the inmates, for many of them were as ferocious as lions. At

length I was removed from this cell to an opposite room on the same hall, and Patrick Fitzgerald was locked up in it, after which a John Belden, a man who, it was said, killed his daughter in a passion. By this time I had learned this cell was used for wicked men, and I was numbered with transgressors in the asylum as well as in the post-coach at my door, when we first started. This, in addition to my own spiritual trouble, added greatly to my sorrows and tears. I was obliged to stay upon this hall with these lion-like men through the day-time, though in fear of my dear life. I was the whole time quiet and peaceable, although I groaned under my burden with groans that could not be uttered. Since I left the asylum I have often visited it, not because I felt it a sort of a home, neither because I was cured, by a course of medical treatment (for I had no medicine administered to me the first four years). I visited, not because I had any antipathy against the governors of this institution, doctors or inspectors. But I visited out of pure motive, for often the words of the Saviour came to

mind, "The poor ye have always with you, and when you will you may do them good." On one of my visits to the asylum, I remarked to Dr. Lomax, "You have got a nice theater, now," said I, "you need one more house, separate from noise, to keep the quiet patients in." Although my advice may not be heeded, I suffered much for want of sleep by being disturbed by noisy inmates. I remained upon this dead-house hall most of the time till the war broke out, about that time I was removed to a small hall near the dining-room. I have said but little about the transactions I saw in that dead-house hall; many that pained my heart. Among the many was one most trying to see, a person walk up and down the hall like a roaring lion, and leaf after leaf torn from the Bible, and destroy it by chewing with his teeth. This Bible lay upon a stand at one end of the hall. Here was a mixed multitude of many nations, of high and low degree, of different faith and different belief, some mild and gentle, whilst others were lion-like and ferocious as tigers; here the quiet ones had to share the abuses

of the ruffians, and the ruffians had to share the abuses of the attendants. I have seen patients that were bound with handcuffs upon this dead-house hall, taken by the throat by attendants, and their breath shut off. I have seen patients called by attendants to their assistance, who would thrash other patients to the floor most cruelly. These transactions, with many others, led me to remark to Doctor Lomax the necessity of having a house of quietude for quiet patients.

Had my father, when farming, put all his stock into one fold, such as the horses, the oxen, the swine, the lambs, and all the fowl kind, would not the strong and ferocious trample down and kill the weak and the innocent, as is done in these popular institutions at the present day? I am not recording such barbarous transactions to gratify a disordered mind, but to wake up sensibility and activity in sane minds to the subject of suffering humanity.

Neither am I setting forth the inward workings of this institution that it may be disannulled by the authority that chartered

it, for the purpose of keeping the unfortunate and poor. I am aware that there are many innocent ones who are suffering in these institutions who are proper subjects for a prayer-meeting and not for a penitentiary. There are many received into these lunatic asylums that are more fit for State prison or penitentiaries than places like these, and these are they that cause so much bloodshed, as did Haly and Mrs. Anderson, in my case, being appointed attendants by the government of the asylum.

I have stated that about the time the civil war broke out I was placed upon a hall near the dining-room, the patients in this hall were more quiet at times. In the room that I occupied were three single beds, one was occupied by Charles Barclay a part of the time, at other times while I remained these were occupied by transient comers. At one time there was a patient came into this room bound with belt and handcuffs, locked up with me for a room companion. Now I was in a perilous situation, for he was a strong, muscular man, apparently unable to control his

thoughts and acts. Many nights he would ramble about the room, climbing from bed to bed, and from window to window, while I lay mute in fear; he descended from his ramble to the floor, raised my bed from its foundation, and threw me prostrate on the floor. Mr. Burr, the attendant, hearing the noise, unlocked the door and hurled him out.

How many times I have thought of sweet home and friends once so dear, when locked up in these rooms with these brute-like men. And many has been the time when I have knelt upon my knees in silent prayer in this poorly governed institution and implored mercy and deliverance, and thanks be to Him who hears prayers, He delivered me and gave me peace, and brought me on my way home rejoicing.

#### MY WIFE'S FIRST VISIT TO THE ASYLUM.

We met for the first time in prison, as a husband and wife in friendship and love. But my troubles were so great that my love for wife or our cousin who came with her was barely manifest, here I had to learn for the

first time how a husband's heart could bleed when visited by a wife, under such adverse circumstances; our first visit was short and I cannot say it was sweet to me, for I dreaded the parting time. Behold, it soon came. I followed her to the door, and took the parting hand, turning around, being overcome, I fell prostrate to the floor. Mrs. Swan remembers this to-day as we talk over our joys and sorrows around our own happy fireside. And I very well remember the question my careworn wife asked the attendant, Mr. Burr. "What," said she, "is the matter with him?" Said the attendant, "he is overcome" — no marvel to me that I was.

#### A WORD TO HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

Few there be, if any, outside of these walls that know the feelings of a husband or a wife, when visited by their friends in these places. I have seen husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, take the parting hand in these institutions and some never to meet again below the sun. I have seen young and old die in these places

and no friend to smooth their dying pillow or wipe the cold sweat from their brow, or catch their dying words. O, Fathers! O, Mothers! keep your unfortunate sons and daughters from these places until a reform is brought about. You know but little how patients are treated by attendants and others. I have seen gentlemen and ladies visit this main house and walk through the hall adjoining the dining room, and remark how nice it looked, and so it did, but can such a one imagine how he or she would feel locked up in one of those side rooms as I was with a raving maniac? How mistaken are many who visit this place. Once there was a smart appearing genteel looking man walking through this hall who remarked (looking into a side room), "if I was sick I should rather be here than home." Thought I, poor deluded man you know but little about this place. In that same room I had lodged, upon the bed was a nice white spread, under the spread, to all appearance, a soft bed, but it was not so, deluded visitor. Would you like to be in that room to-day and be treated

as one poor man was in the hands of two doctors and their attendant? One says, put the rope here, tie it up there, and a long struggle ensues between the parties, at length he gives a long moan, saying, "I shall have to give up."

This patient once had a kind mother and an affectionate father, but where is he now? Go visitor, to lunatic asylums as visitor, but until you go as a patient you will know but little about the secret workings of these institutions. Fathers and mothers, friends and neighbors, send your sick and unfortunate ones to these places, and you little know how they are treated and dealt with. I have learned to my sorrow how patients are treated, and I would say to one and all, know you are right before you transport any to an earthly hell.

Since I left the Ida Hill asylum, in 1871, I have often visited it, going through from center to circumference, being permitted so to do by Dr. Lomax, who was the resident medical superintendent, and is up to this time, 1874. Dr. Lomax is the only physician that

I formed an intimate acquaintance with while a patient in this institution, and this acquaintance was first formed in the incurable house, and to do Dr. L. justice, in my opinion he is a gentleman. I found, in 1871, that he could not only reason, but that he was willing to hear others. After I had thoroughly weighed him in my own mind, I resolved to improve every opportunity of reasoning with him I had, for with him, I had learned, depended my permit to go *home*, and that I very well knew would not be until he thought me sane in body and mind. I often heard patients ask attendants if they could go home, "Ask the Doctor," was the get-off.

A few of my interviews with Dr. L. are in future pages.

#### APPARENTLY A GARDEN OF PARADISE.

When first I entered this house, situated upon Ida Hill, in 1860, on the west side lay a beautiful garden, inclosed with a gate on either side, east and west, from gate to gate, was the vineyard forming a shady walk, between the house and the garden was a

thorny hedge, within this garden were many kinds of trees bearing fruit, and like Adam and Eve, our first parents, I saw Mr. and Mrs. John Harrison often walking in this asylum garden, in the cool of the day. Soon after I entered this house, I found a circular containing the rules and by-laws of this institution, and in it I learned that Mr. Harrison was steward, and Mrs. Harrison was matron. I also learned that there was a chapel in the building, and Mr. Harrison often read a chapter and prayed at the sacred desk, though for ten long years he has not spoken to me, neither had I been into the chapel, and no one had given me an encouraging word, however much I needed it. In 1870, I found a friend, who encouraged my heart, and assisted me to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling.

Since I left the asylum not a cloud has gathered o'er my mind to darken my hopes in regard to my future happiness and joys in a future state, which for more than ten years was the burden of my heart.

Like Paul, I have suffered, and that too for

Christ's sake ; like Paul I have been cruelly beaten, yea, and imprisoned, and my feet made fast in the stocks or straps. And like Job I have been delivered into the hands of the devil, all but my life apparently.

Whatever might have been the great design of the good Lord in my case, I can say, with Paul, our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I believe the path of the righteous groweth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, though they may have trials and afflictions to encounter ; Jesus promised his grace shall be sufficient for them.

Again and again I have visited the asylum, and when I look for that once beautiful garden it is not there, it is gone, the hedge is removed, the vineyard is rooted up, the beautiful pear tree that was heavily loaded near the window was gone, the currant bush and the strawberry beds all removed. We ask the cause of this great change. Who hath sinned, this happy appearing pair or their children, or the twenty-six governors of the

institution. We hope for the best, praying that change after change may take place, until lunatic asylums become what they were originally designed for, the benefit of the inmates and their weeping friends, and not for the benefit of slave holders in the first degree.

Like the garden, we shall all be changed in the twinkling of an eye.

#### THE GARDEN CONVERTED INTO SHADY WALKS.

During my stay in the incurable house from July 3, 1862, to October 13, 1871, the beautiful garden that lay west of the asylum was converted into pleasant walks, with paths and crosswalks overspread with beautiful shade trees of various kinds, and a beautiful croquet lawn, neatly arranged for the diversion of the patients.

In 1860 or 1861 I was met at the dining table by Wm. B. Gibbs, an old acquaintance, who accosted me in the following manner: "How do you do, Brother Swan, I am glad to see you here." Glad, thought I, and happy to see a brother shut up in a lunatic

asylum. I was not made glad to see any one who did not try to help me to get home. In the main house I had but few calls from acquaintances. I will record the names of those: My wife, P. Stade, Pittstown; C. Pierce, do; Mrs. Norman Baker, do; Mr. Sprut, do; John Warren, do. Home, home sweet home, thought I.

This Wm. B. Gibbs have just come from Utica Asylum, having been there once and again many years, at this time somewhat ferocious and mischievous, became quiet, and his sister took him home about 1867, with whom he now lives in a low, melancholy state of mind.

N. B. — Sometimes a person's troubles arise from the abuses of others, and sometimes from self-abuse. Could self-abused persons say as did the penitent thief on the cross, all would be well.

#### MY TREATMENT IN THE MAIN HOUSE.

The first night I was locked up in the inner prison or cell heretofore alluded to, and this was enough to make a rational man

crazy. What, said I, a lunatic asylum for my home, a cell for my dining room, a cell for my lodging, and a cell for my closet of prayer. Ah, friend, can you imagine how one feels, sick and in prison, friendless and hopeless.

The first night said I, no dear wife to smooth down my pillow, and no dear daughter to fan my fainting person, or to give a cup of cold water. Ah, what a deplorable situation, if I die I must die alone.

Main House. In this house I received no maltreatment from attendants (much from patients, Gibbs, and others). I remained in this house fifteen months without the opportunity to go out, even to the chapel. Not a particle of medicine was administered to me while in this house, not a book did I have to read after O'Donnell destroyed the Bible.

#### MY BOARD AND BEDDING.

As to my board in this house, I have no fault to find, in regard to myself I had enough and in good order, a few strawberries and grapes in their season and vegetables

occasionally, also on thanksgiving and the holidays some nice meats from the poultry yard, this is customary. After I was taken from the dead-house cell or cell near the dead-house, I was changed from hall to hall and from bed-room to bed-room, and locked in by different attendants, treated roughly by room-mates, not by attendants personally, but inasmuch as they did not care they did it unto me. The bedsteads that I occupied were iron through, the beds were mattresses; well supplied with suitable clothing; in this house, summer and winter, kept neat and clean (on my part) more so than of many others.

#### REMARKS.

There is a heaven where angels sing, there is an opposite where devils prowl. There is a paradise and there is a world of woe, and although a person be exalted to heaven in point of privilege he may be thrust down to hell. In this apparent paradise, my five Pittstown neighbors saw me once, and like the deluded man perhaps made up their minds this was the place for me. Be it known that

I, Moses Swann, was never a proper subject for a lunatic asylum (only as a spy or for the sake of others), neither was the devil a christian when he met with the sons of God. Whoever complained against me or believed me a proper subject for such a lunatic asylum, was as greatly mistaken as I was in regard to my future happiness; ten years I was conscientiously mistaken, they might have been; our Saviour said first pull the beam out of thine own eye then thou canst see more clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. Many there are who know their neighbors in their own estimation better than they know their own hearts.

#### MY WIFE'S LAST VISIT TO THE MAIN HOUSE.

In the spring of 1861, my wife visited me; that year the war broke out in the south. As we sat in the dining room I said to her, "there is a war." "O, yes," said she, "and many of the stores are shut in Troy." Our hearts were too sad to talk much about home and past time, our visit was short, she inquired of me something about my fare, to her I never

complained, knew she was too weak to bear my burdens, therefore I made the best of it to her.

The separation time drew near, she says to a patient, "let me out" (supposing him to be the attendant or turnkey), "not so" said I, calling George Harrison (for he was attendant then), we took the parting hand once more in a lunatic asylum.

Soon after we took the parting hand at this time, I was removed to the south or dead-house hallway, having been shaved by Adkins, the lunatic barber; I was now afraid I should be shaved to death by others. When I returned to this hall I was met by a large, robust, muscular man, his name I did not learn, English by birth. Not long after he came into my bed-room with patient Gibbs and ordered me to change my own suit for others, I knew not whose, I was very loth to do so, fearing I should never get them again, and so it is as yet, my trunk, overcoat, and all I carried there were retained, although I asked the steward for them when I left the institution in 1871, Oct. 13.

MY REMOVAL FROM THE MAIN HOUSE TO THE  
INCURABLE ONE.

On the morning of the 3d day of July, 1862, the attendant, above described, came into the hall and put an old white hat on my head; taking me by the arm, says, "Come, go up to the other house" (meaning the incurable one) "and stay a few weeks." "I don't want to go," said I. He then left me, and soon returned with George Harrison, who steps up to me and says, "You must go." The attendant again took me by the arm, and I stepped out door for the first time since I entered the institution. He led me on up the hill. By the way we were met by Wm. Anderson, who abruptly said, "You have got him then." (At this time Anderson was cow-boy and common helper.) On I marched, like a prisoner in the hands of a drunken policeman (for I could smell his whisky breath). Presently we came in sight of the old brick small-pox house, which is used as a branch asylum, or incurable house, to stow away poor unfortunate victims like myself. As we came to the south

door we were met, not as at Endor by the great whore of Babylon, but by the great maiden *Isabel* Anderson, who bound me, as seen in the engraving.

The attendant now asks the Magdalene *Isabel*, "Where shall I put him?" "In the room where there is one man," said she. Up one flight of stairs we went, turning to the right. I was locked up with Ebenezer Scott, who assisted T. Haly to strangle me, when bound by Isabel. (See engraving.)

Though the reader may think it strange that I should know Isabel, the Magdalenish woman, when I entered the incurable house, and know it was the 3d of July, 1862, having had no almanac, yet, it is, nevertheless, true. How I knew it was the third, when I was removed from house to house, because the next day was celebrated as our American Independence, I saw the little boys with fire-crackers; I heard the loud cannons roar; I saw the fire-works or sky-rockets ascend high in the air from Troy and Albany, while looking out of the window in the evening. How I knew Isabel — saw her at the main house

scouring the oil-cloth in the hall; saw her raking hay in the door-yard; saw her and Dr. Gregory stand out door looking into my window, when my wife and I were visiting quietly, alone, in a room near the dining room and kitchen; this was in the winter of 1860, the same year I entered the asylum.

Again. In my opinion, when Haly and Isabel bound me, she was a Magdalenian woman of the Cain family, possessed of seven devils, and, although the *Troy Daily Whig* would not publish for me against such treatment, because they got much gain from the institution on Ida Hill, still they caused the following to be published in their columns, namely, Isabel's suicidal and untimely death, which took place March 16, 1873 — hanging to the same balusters whose stairs led to my room in the third story of the incurable house — same stairs she dragged Wm. Jefferson down.

SUICIDE AT THE MARSHALL INFIRMARY—A FEMALE NURSE HANGS HERSELF TO THE BALUSTERS—THE CAUSE A MYSTERY.

The inmates of Marshall Infirmary were greatly shocked on arising yesterday morning to discover that one of the nurses had hanged herself during the night. The facts are as follows :

Isabel Anderson, aged about fifty-four years, first entered the employ of the infirmary as a nurse some eight or ten years ago. She was assigned to take charge of the ward for female insane persons, but when the small-pox was epidemic, her ward was changed, and small-pox patients were put under her charge. At the disappearance of that disease she was again placed in her old position. She had been suffering from some obscure disease since January last, but within the last few days she had greatly improved, and when her husband (who has charge of the male insane ward) left her on Saturday night, she appeared to feel better and more cheerful than she had in some time.

A little before 1 o'clock, yesterday morning, her husband thought he heard her knock at the door, and consequently went to her room, but found every thing quiet. It is probable that the noise Mr. Anderson heard

proceeded from some one of the insane patients who are more or less noisy all the time. After satisfying himself that every thing was right he returned to his room and went to sleep. On rising about 6 o'clock, he was descending to his wife's room, when he was horrified to see his wife suspended by the neck from the balusters on the third story. He immediately gave the alarm, and with assistance, cut down the body and laid it out in her room. Mrs. Anderson was a very fleshy woman, weighing over two hundred pounds, and the supposition is that she left her room between 1 and 6 o'clock, taking one of the sheets from her bed, and proceeding to the hallway on the third story, tied one end of it to her neck and the other to the balusters and then dropped over the rail. Owing to her great weight it is probable that she died almost immediately. Coroner Brennan was notified and took charge of the remains, and he will hold an inquest.

Mrs. Anderson will be buried to-morrow. She was a hard working, industrious woman, and by studied economy had saved considerable money and bought three or four houses up-town. Her husband was very devoted to her and feels his loss keenly. He cannot give any cause for her suicide, as she had never threatened anything of the kind nor

given any reason to suspect such an intention. It is but justice to say that the persons in charge of the infirmary are entirely blameless in the matter, as Mrs. Anderson was capable of attending to her duties as usual. We make this remark, as the public are often apt to blame the authorities of a hospital when any such occurrence takes place. Dr. Lomax, who is at present confined to his room, stated to a *Whig* reporter that the affair was an entire mystery to him. Mrs. Anderson was one of the most faithful, honest and industrious nurses ever employed in any hospital and had never shown any signs of insanity. Her sickness, however, may have caused her mind to be depressed, and perhaps during the night she may have been taken with some acute pains, and jumping out of bed, deliberately committed the act.

The above local news is an extract from the *Troy Daily Whig*, Monday morning, March 17, 1873.

I knew that Isabel Anderson was turnkey in the incurable house of the Marshall asylum more than nine years.

I know that Isabel Anderson was not honest. My wife brought me two flannel shirts, they were marked M. Swan, on the bosom,

I wore them a few times and they were gone, and they were worn by Isabel and Haly that winter, and I had to go without all winter.

So much for the *Troy Daily Whig*.

M. Swan at home.

Isabel's maiden name was Miss Anderson, Dr. Lomax told me she was married after I went to the incurable house, in care of Haly and others. After Mrs. Isabel was married to William Anderson, he became an attendant over the male patients, and I came under his care ; this was about 1866 or 1867.

## CHAPTER V.

JUDGED INCURABLE, JULY 3, 1861 — ROOMING  
WITH EBENEZER SCOTT.

The first attendant over me in the incurable house was a Dutchman called Chris, I recognized him as a helper ; when I was in the main-house William Anderson told me Chris and his wife were patients, now attendants ; the first shaving day he called me into the hall, Sears standing by, who was a patient also, and I was shaved by another

lunatic barber, in fear of my life, in a lunatic asylum.

I appeal to the committee of managers. Would either of you dare be shaved by one of these? (I answer in the negative.) Then adopt the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

The incurable house of the Marshall institution is situated upon Ida Hill, between the main house and the pest-house, in an open field, on either end of the house are high hills, making a lonely place. Beneath is the Hollow road, and on the west beneath, is the great Hudson river to be seen, passing between South and West Troy. Often have I seen, in the time of the war, the great flag hoisted near the arsenal, and heard the loud cannons roar, when locked up a prisoner in this house.

#### INCURABLE HOUSE.

July 3, 1862. Soon after I was in the room with Scott, in came Chris and ordered me to take off the coat that was given me by the attendant and Gibbs in the main house; time

passed on, the hour for dinner came, in came Chris and his wife with dinner, placing mine upon a small stand and Scott's upon his bed, one plate each and a cup of water. Here we slept, ate and done all we did do for many weeks, and I declare, it was not a very sweet smelling place for a dining-room, in the month of July. This room was on the second floor, the other rooms were occupied by females. In the adjoining room there were two colored women. The old Mrs. Jones that Chris struck when she came into my room at dinner time, died before I left, the other referred to is Maria, who I have often seen there since 1870, if I am not mistaken.

#### AFTER THE REIGN OF CHRIS.

Alfred, who I have described as the painter, was a very intemperate man, English by birth; first saw him in the main house, in 1860-61; did not see him bound there, heard he was, to a stationary chair. I went to the incurable house July 3d, 1862; saw him there, he done some painting in the

house. After Chris was removed Alfred had the key to my room and Scott's. Scott was a man about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age. I soon learned he was a self-abused person and that he knew how to abuse others. I think he was an impenitent, self-condemned madman ; he knew enough to work, he knew when he was called to dinner ; most of the time sullen and mute.

Some time in July John P. Bacon was brought from the main house to my room and bound to a stationary chair. Now we numbered three in this room of perfumery. J. P. Bacon was a resident of Lansingburgh, some nineteen or twenty years old ; had been taken to, and brought from, Utica asylum previous to his coming to Ida Hill asylum.

In the fall of 1862 we were moved to the third floor, and I roomed with Scott and others in the middle east room nights, being locked in another through the daytime, with many maniacs. Upon this third floor I staid until I got my liberty in 1870. Walked out a few times.

DOCTORS, ATTENDANTS AND PATIENTS IN THE  
INCURABLE HOUSE.

During my stay in this house I became acquainted with many different attendants and patients whose names I here record, and shall speak of some of them individually in subsequent pages.

NAMES OF ATTENDANTS AND DOCTORS IN THE  
INCURABLE HOUSE.

Second, Dr. Lomax and Dr. Gregory, first.

Names of male attendants: 1. Chris., 2. Alfred, Sears, patient; unknown, gagged Barclay; Isabella, when Alfred was drunk, Thomas Haly, Ebenezer Scott, patient; name unknown, robbed me of tobacco, Amos Knowles, patient; William Anderson was attendant from 1867 to 1871 and is still in 1874.

Names of female attendants: Mrs. Isabella Anderson, up to March 17, 1873, then hanged; Mary Wager, August 6th, 1873. Converses with her.

## NAMES OF THE MALE PATIENTS IN THE INCURABLE HOUSE.

Ebenezer Scott, John P. Bacon, Lansingburgh ; Patrick Mealy, O'Conner, Thomas Leonard, Dr. Klingstine, Berlin ; Sherman S. Bristol, Troy ; Charles Barclay, from Utica Asylum ; John Smalley, son did visit him ; Mr. Walis, wife and sons visit ; John H. Ham, father and mother visit ; N. Buel, Troy, wife visited ; Wm. B. Gibbs, Pittstown ; Nelson West, Pittstown ; Kirk Hull, Berlin ; Wm. Lewis, Berlin ; Gen. Skyler, West Troy ; Sears, and Wm. Lawrence, Boint ; Wm. Jefferson, Troy.

## FEMALE PATIENTS IN THE INCURABLE HOUSE.

Miss Jones, colored ; Mariah, colored ; Miss Petre ; Aunta (so called), Miss Lawn, Miss Byron, one Indian woman, one called Betsy, Catharine Morris, Bridget Hamilton, Ann Twogood, late from Pittstown, 1874.

Patients in the incurable house averaged from thirty to thirty-seven, say about one-third males. Dead removed and live ones brought.

## REIGN OF ALFRED.

After 1862 I roomed in the east middle room, roomed nights, for a number of years with patients from England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany and America, black and white, of many professions and different beliefs, and truly it was a high school to an observing mind.

Be it known to the reader it was not a very desirable lodging room, now and then awoke in dead of night by the groans of the dying in an adjoining bed.

In this room were from four to five single beds of straw, some two feet apart. At one time for many weeks lay a negro, Wm. Lawrence, bound to his bed and handcuffed, singing and whistling, although he was bound with an asylum harness such as I am exhibiting around the country in public. I was afraid of my life; he was a wicked, self-abused young man.

Oh! what a set of school mates, thought I. But to these I made no conversation. I have often seen Wm. Lawrence compelled

to wash dishes with hands bound ; one morning Haly told me to hold up the darkey's dirty pants so he could step into them. Attendant's word was law. I raised them front side toward the darkey in presence of attendant. "Go away," says he, supposing me to be green. I willingly left and had no more darkeys to wait upon.

SCOTT.

After Lawrence left this bed, Scott was placed in it. Although I had never spoken to Scott he had once kicked me severely when walking upon the hall peaceably and quiet.

Again, one night, soon after we were all locked up in this room Scott arose from his bed, placed his feet upon the floor, grabbed me by the whiskers with both hands, throwing himself backward upon his bed, held me fast. And I can truly say he is the first person I ever struck, and I could not strike him very hard though in self-defense, for I was very weak, and my antagonist was a strong young madman.

At this critical moment the door unlocked

and in came Alfred, the attendant, saying, "what is the matter?" though I did not practice talking I told the truth.

The attendant placed upon Scott the Asylum harness and hurled him out of the room; after a time he returned with Scott wet and nearly fainting, then strapping him to the bed for the night. In this transaction Scott learned a lesson by sad experience, that I learned by observation.

ALFRED'S REIGN CONTINUED THOUGH UNDER  
ISABEL MAGDALENE.

It must be remembered that in Alfred's reign the hall on the second floor, occupied by females, was accessible to the hall above, occupied by male patients, as the stairs were not at the time cased up.

One day as I stood looking from the head of the stairs, I saw down at the foot, a female lunatic bound in a straight jacket in a squabble with Isabel the Magdalene attendant, then quickly passed by Alfred, and down to the ward-hall, severely laying hold of the almost helpless lunatic, crushing her to the

floor upon her back, then jumping upon her bowels, with both his knees and with all his heft pounced upon her, like a ferocious animal upon his prey. It was a bloody battle, pray, judge ye, how I felt seeing the blood standing in pools on the floor. Yea, reader, drop a sympathizing tear for the unfortunate sufferers who are locked in lunatic asylums with such brutal outcasts for attendants. Union is strength, this the serpent-like know as well as the righteous. And He who knows all hearts hath said, "Though the wicked go hand in hand, they shall not go unpunished."

#### ALFRED'S REIGN CONTINUED.

In reviewing and comparing the former transaction with this transaction, committed in the large room on the third floor, used as a lock-up for many patients during the daytime, Alfred being the key-master. In this room we done what we could not help doing, and upon my honor it was not one of the finest perfumed rooms.

Among the many was a German man, much deformed and an object of pity (his

name I cannot recall), he would walk about the room, though wearing a part of the asylum harness, discontented, uneasy and to all appearance deluded and insane, acting upon first thought like many, regardless of consequences.

One warm day as he was promenading about the room he drew his foot and kicked the chamber-pail from the corner of the room to the center, dumping its contents amongst the crew. In came Alfred and Isabel, the male and female attendants, down with the poor deluded man, and whilst Alfred was placing upon him the remainder of the accursed harness, Isabel stood heavily upon his ankles with both feet, holding him in her grasp.

And now for the bath-room, down stairs they went with their victim. After a time he was returned to the room wet and weak, placed in a chair with not strength to hold up his head, he soon fell prostrate to the floor with his hands bound ; soon after he died and was stretched upon the dead board and carried out.

I have now already related two transactions wherein both the male and female attendants were engaged in brutual acts against poor lunatic persons, who should have had the sympathy of all and kind treatment by attendants.

By this time the reader sees that these wicked attendants are in league and go hand in hand in crimes of this kind.

The Devil is the father of the Cain family and the father of lies, and almost all of the attendants of lunatic asylums are graduates or pupils in that family, as near as I can judge by their works, "for by their works ye shall know them."

#### ALFRED STILL HOLDS THE REIN OF GOVERNMENT.

I will relate another transaction wherein I, M. Swan, was a great sufferer, and lest the reader may think me a trespasser, I will state it was not for what I had done, but for what I could not do.

Early one morning J. P. Bacon, Scott, Fitzgerald, Clingstain and others, six or eight

in number, were brought in my room and seated on a bench in a line, then Alfred began to clip their hair one by one, giving them the State prison clip, so called. He then says to me, "sit down." I knew most of them to be wicked men, and to sit down with them and receive the mark, I could not, and disobeyed his command by saying, "I can't."

I believe the spirit is the moving cause or mainspring of the mind, and the mind is the man, or in other words, "that which suffers or enjoys."

Reader, can you rise from your seat until your mind is changed? Can a mistaken person change his or her ways till the mind is changed? Could the blind man whose eyes Jesus opened see until there was a cure wrought by the Divine Redeemer? Could Saul of Tarsus, desist in persecuting the church till his mind was changed, for he said he "verily thought he was doing God service?" And so like Paul I labored under the mistaken notion in my weakness, that I should be lost forever, yet I was a firm believer in the truth; I believed others could

be saved. I was afraid to do any thing wrong, and no person saw me smile during my captivity for more than ten years.

But to my story. I said, "I can't," when he told me to sit down to have my hair sheared. The attendant then removed all others from the room, locking me in. Presently he returned with patient Sears. Sears was a great, stout, robust-looking man, having in his hand two of the straps BB, buckled together with a noose made in the same. They both rushed toward me. I backed into the corner, and Sears tried to lasso me by throwing the noose or running-knot over my head. In the meantime, I raised my hands, warding off the noose. Sears being tired of this, then tried to persuade me to be bound, asking me to put on cuffs A, which I refused. He plead like the devil transformed into an angel of light, saying, "put them on, they won't hurt you," and then tried to encourage me by saying, he had had them on a hundred times. Oh, the devil let loose in the person of Sears and attendant Alfred.

This moment a boy came along near the

window. Attendant raised the window and told him to send up a man from the other house to bind a man (meaning me), and the cowards left, and cowards they were, for the boy, not more than twelve years old, could have floored me at that time in a moment.

I watched their return in fear and trembling. Presently the two cowards, encouraged by David Hicks, a child of the devil Isabel, for he often called her mother for the sake of gain. Hicks was a strong person, of more than medium size. The three rushed up to me, Hicks grabbed me around my body and arms, hurling me to the floor in a moment, placing his heavy knee upon my left side. "Oh," said I, "You will break my ribs." "It is of little consequence," says Hicks. Holding me fast, whilst the two cowards bound me with the accursed harness. The attendant then raised me upon my feet; the three ruffians then kicked me into another room to a chair that was ironed to the floor, when seated, my hands being bound as seen in the engraving; the attendant ran strap B and B between my body and arms,

on either side, then below to the rounds of the chair; then drawing strap F, which was fast to my feet, by cuff D and D, strap F was locked to the back round of the chair. In this suffering condition, in pain from my wounded side and ribs, all day long I sit, nothing to eat, not even a cup of cold water. I was much fatigued and faint when the sun set in the west. But, says the reader, as many others have said, who have listened to the rehearsal of this transaction, did the attendant cut your hair off, he did not, he loosed me in the evening, told me he would never bind me again, and he kept his word as to that.

#### REMARKS.

I wore the accursed harness but twice in the asylum, and that too against my will, not as a duty. But now in 1874 I am exhibiting a similar one that I bought of a Mr. Hogan, as a duty, to let the people know how patients are treated in lunatic asylums. Although I have received maltreatment in asylums in New York and Vermont States,

I am not altogether opposed to these institutions, for there are insane persons who have no homes, yet I protest against maltreatment. We are received as insane, unfortunate beings, use us kind, and the good Lord will reward you. Will lecture upon this subject, and exhibit the asylum harness, when arrangements are made in proper places. Address M. Swan, Hoosick Falls, Rensselaer county, N. Y.

A charge to keep, I have,  
A God to glorify,  
A never dying soul to save,  
And fit it for the skies.

To serve the present age,  
My calling to fulfill,  
Oh, may it all my power engage  
To do my master's will.

Although I may not have the gift of a poet, and may not have the gift of prophecy, neither be as good as John the Baptist, yet I can truly say, like Paul, I have been beaten for Christ's sake, when bound in the Ida Hill Lunatic Asylum.

It is not a pleasant task for me to reveal the faults of others, more particularly those of

the dead, yet when I realize how many are robbed of their liberty and lives, my soul is stirred within me, in behalf of poor sufferers in these institutions.

If these great sins are the sins of ignorance or neglect on the part of any one of the governors or inspectors, or government, it is not to be winked at.

ALFRED THE INTEMPERATE ATTENDANT'S  
CRUELTY TO JOHN SMALLEY, A PATIENT.

J. Smalley came to the main house in 1860; removed to the incurable one before the 3d of July, in 1862, where he died about 1864 or '65. He was a man some seventy-five years old, weighing about seventy or eighty pounds.

By what I gathered from him he had been an inn-keeper, and had become an intemperate man. Alfred, the attendant, gave him liquor for medicine, a share to himself. John Smalley lodged in the black or brown floor room; I have often seen him bound to the window bars, from day to day; often seen attendants carry him down stairs for washing;

but what was more cruel, I saw Alfred pounce upon him while he was lying upon his back in bed, stamping him with both knees upon his bowels. The poor old man had a son come to see him, but what of that, be ye clothed and be ye fed does no more good than the priest's passing look did the man who went from Jerusalem down to Jericho and fell among thieves.

I ask, could not the old man's son have acted the part of the good Samaritan, and took the old man to an inn and bound up the wounds that Alfred, the attendant, made by his cruel treatment.

MY WIFE VISITING ME IN THE INCURABLE  
HOUSE WITH BROTHER B. AND NEPHEW.

*Dr. Gregory, in the Reign of Alfred.*

After my wife and brother B. and his son Livy had been received for the first time into the incurable house, and seated in the south hall, I was loosed from the large room where I was once bound, and taken to the hall to meet my wife and brother for the first time

in this hopeless house. My wife and friends had been told by doctors there was no hope of my being any better, I was incurable. This caused my visits to be few and far between.

I was considered a worthless man, and a nuisance. I was asked by my wife if I would like to go home with them, when I answered yes. Brother spoke to Alfred in regard to my going, who says, "You must ask Dr. Gregory." We took the parting hand and I remained a sufferer for years to come.

#### TREATMENT OF J. H. HAM BY ALFRED.

J. H. Ham had a father and mother who visited him in the back hall. Henry was a young man, not twenty years of age. Saw him bound day after day with the whole of the asylum harness, fastened to a chair, with gag in his mouth day after day for being noisy. He was often taken to the bath tub and put into cold water so long that his feet were frozen. I saw chilblains he said were caused by so doing. Young Ham, under this treatment, grew pale and weak, and one leg

became almost useless. I saw his father come and take him away.

Rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep.

FRIDAY MORNING, *June* 18, 1874.

Just returned from my daughter; saw her for the first time press her first-born babe to her bosom with a smile. Who can know the joys of my daughter's heart this morning but a mother.

Who knows the feeling of the Virgin Mary when she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger.

Who knows her feelings when she gazed upon the cross and saw her son bleeding and dying.

Who can know that mother's grief when she stood by Joseph's tomb inquiring of the angel for her risen Lord.

Who knows the feelings of Jesus when he was agonizing in the garden of Gethsemane.

Who knows the feelings of Jesus but a Jesus, when he hung upon the cross saying,

“Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” ’Tis easy for a mother to love her infant, but to love our enemies is more than all burnt sacrifices. Try it.

Again, who can know the heartrending feelings of the author, when he reviews the ten years of his asylum life, and thinks of the poor he left in bonds, and exclaims, help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth.

Help me to watch and pray,  
And on Thyself rely,  
Assured if I my trust betray  
I shall forever die.

Arm me with zealous care,  
As in thy sight to live,  
And oh, thy servant, Lord, prepare,  
A strict account to give.

## CHAPTER VI.

### FRED THE ATTENDANT AFTER ALFRED.

Fred was a native from England; had a wife with him; lodged in attendants' room, near me; Fred abused me shamefully by bathing and washing me in water and human filth; then galled off my wet hair, in spots, with the shears, disfiguring my person for

gazers to sneer at; yet, I had feelings for others, as well as for myself.

One time he had a victim or patient bound with hand-cuffs, A, seated on the irons of an iron bed-stead, with his feet fastened up to the same, thus sitting till falling backward upon the iron rack, crying and groaning in pain from torture.

But, oh, alas! as I have said, they kill some in these institutions.

#### SECOND TRANSACTION OF FRED AGAINST HIS VICTIM.

Behold the *man*, a *lunatic*, in a lunatic asylum, bound with muff, E, as seen in the engraving. And as I positively saw in the incurable house; Fred, with a chair raised above his victim's head, with one round broken; did not see him strike him with the chair, but saw him drag him out of the room by the neck, bound, as described above, with strap, B, noosed around his throat and neck, as a hunter lassoes the wild horse. Behold them at the head of the stairs, as I did; Fred hurrying through the doorway, and his vic-

tim slammed against the door-post, helpless and bound as he was, slamming around the door-post, strangling, in fear of the awful precipice below, down he plunges to the bottom, and like one in deep water, disappeared from my sight for a time.

After a time came back Fred, the asylum nurse, and the poor strangled man, bound as he was, and wet from head to foot, nature was almost exhausted; he survived a few hours, and gave up the ghost.

#### A FEW THOUGHTS SUGGESTED.

Is this Marshall Lunatic Asylum a slave depot to hold poor unfortunate men and women, and send them on to eternity without a moment's warning, prepared or not, and no one accountable? Money is the root of all evil. And these sins are sins of ignorance, not to be winked at.

Herod laid hold on John, and bound him and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, for naught but telling the truth.

And the king sent and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was given to the

daughter of Herodias, who danced before the king and his guests on his birth-day. Is no one accountable for his death?

And John's disciples went and told Jesus.

And I often tell Jesus how attendants kill poor lunatics in Troy Lunatic Asylum.

And I have been and told Governor Dix, of New York State, how they bound and pounded me, without cause, and strangled me. I carried the accursed harness into the executive chamber, hoping that Governor Dix would protest against such treatment; and I still hope.

I have exhibited to Mayor Kemp, of Troy city, the accursed harness, and revealed to him the cruel treatment the lunatics undergo in Ida Hill Lunatic Asylum by the Cain family or their children.

I have told the president of the institution how badly I was treated when bound by Isabella, hoping to influence the government by setting before them the facts as I saw and realized them.

I have lectured privately and publicly with all long suffering upon the subject of asylum

life; though it be sown in weakness it may be raised in strength to the good of poor sufferers and redound to the glory of God.

ATTENDANT AFTER FRED, NAME UNKNOWN.

This attendant was a carpenter or mechanic of some kind; was a tall, lean, bald-headed, cruel-hearted man. His stay was short; negro Lawrence was too strong for him, as I saw them in a tussle; but a child could handle a strong man when harnessed tightly with the asylum harness.

A soldier of the last war, after listening to one transaction and seeing the asylum harness, told me how he was tortured when a prisoner in Libby prison, bound in chains and almost starved. I have seen so much of human nature I believed him. A fool can lead a horse to water but he cannot make him drink. I have revealed great truths thus far in my history; do not expect to convert the world, but will try to do my duty.

TRANSACTIONS IN MY ROOM.

Charles Barclay was a great sufferer in the hands of this cruel mechanic and attendant,

Barclay being bound with handcuffs, A, muff, E, and belt B, became somewhat noisy. He had enough to endure to make a sane man crazy.

One morning came in this cruel mechanic with a cord tied to a round stick as large as a broom handle, placed it into Barclay's mouth then placing the cord back of his neck tied it to the other end of the stick, which was in the poor man's mouth, his hands were bound and he was gagged and left in this suffering condition till dinner time; loosened a little while for dinner and then gagged till supper time, and so on from day to day.

Reader, did I not have a specific object of prayer before me as a room mate?

#### AFTER THE GAGGING ATTENDANT LEFT.

Another attendant came who gave me the first medicine I had after I entered the institution. The first medicine I received was three sugar-coated pills; must have been in the spring of 1864, it was before I became acquainted with Dr. Lomax.

No unkindness did he manifest to me,

only he robbed me of the tobacco my wife brought me on her visit about that time.

FALL OF 1864, VISITED BY MR. AND MRS. G.  
WADSWORTH AND MY WIFE.

Mr. George Wadsworth, his wife and mine, were shown into my room by Isabella, when in came the male attendant and Isabella made an excuse for showing them to my room. I was lying in bed, in low spirits, weak and discouraged. I asked no questions about friends or home. I knew Wadsworth and his wife Lotty, although I had not seen them in four years. For a person to be visited in a prison, especially by acquaintances, is not very pleasant and to be left is harder. I was asked by my wife if I knew Mrs. Wadsworth, who I so much liked to hear sing when at church.

The countenances of neighbors were as familiar to me when seen in prison as out. I knew the different kinds of birds although their sweet music had lost its charms to me. I preferred home in preference to that place, and had I had one encouraging word in that

direction my heart would have leaped for joy at that time.

We took the parting hand. Oh, think for a moment, reader, how must a dear wife have felt, when the tears trickled down her cheek, to leave her husband in an incurable asylum ; incurable as she had often been told by doctors.

At one time, and again a brother J. visited, at other times a brother B., and one time a brother R., from Buffalo, visited me, whom I had not seen for many years, and while the tears streamed from both our eyes we separated, perhaps to meet no more on earth. Pen cannot describe, I must hasten.

I sent to a brother L., living in California, the transaction as seen and described in the engraving, saying I would send him this history, when published. He writes as follows :

“It is enough,” praying me not to send it, “I cannot bear to read of so much sufferings of a brother.”

I pray you who cannot read my history and sufferings take the Bible and read of Paul, beaten and in prison, of Job, of our

Saviour, in the garden, pleading that the cup might pass, and read the story of the cross.

THOMAS HALY, INCURABLE HOUSE ATTENDANT.

Haly was born of old country parents, and so was Isabella, the magdalen woman, who helped him bind me, as seen in the engraving.

The morning they bound me, as seen in the picture, I was standing by a window in the short hall, when Haly came to me and says, in a harsh voice, ‘go to the dummy and stand till it is ready.’ I immediately obeyed, and as I stopped at the place he drew his foot and kicked me severely. I turned around, showing no violence, did not speak to him, don’t think I had for days; but he drew his fist and says “don’t face me;” I then turned to the dummy and soon raised the breakfast from the kitchen to the third floor. This transaction was the beginning of the second one which took place soon after breakfast with me, as seen in the engraving.

I believe these transactions were plotted and agreed upon by the two wicked attendants.

The first time my friends came I told them Haly and Isabella were killing me, but I suppose they thought me to be crazy, though I never heard any one call me crazy until Magistrate Boynton, of Pittstown, addressed me as follows: "You crazy old hypocrite, when are you going back to the asylum?" I hope Boynton will become a gentleman. Man, know thyself.

Again, as I was telling another man how Haly pounded me with the strap and buckle leaving wounds up to that time, he replied, "may be you needed it." I hope he will be saved by and by through faith in Christ yet to be obtained.

I saw Haly in a fight with Patrick Fitzgerald; had an iron weight in his hand, and the blood streaming from the patient's brow. Patrick was received as a lunatic; thrust into the dead-house cell soon after I was taken out in 1860. I believe a lunatic should be treated as a mischievous little innocent child.

I never begged but once. I begged while in that strangling condition for my

dear life, and, whilst life remains, I will beg and pray for those I left behind me in lunatic asylums, numbering seven hundred unfortunate ones.

MY WIFE, DAUGHTER AND MRS. ALEXANDER'S  
VISIT.

Some time after Haly and Isabel and Scott strangled me ; I was very weak and short of breath ; and at the time my wife and daughter came I was very weak ; I told them the cause, and, perhaps, will never recover from that lung and breath straining. Be that as it may, God is my helper, and I shall not want.

Up to the time Haly left, and anon, Isabel had access to the men's department, and acted as independent as though she was mistress of all. After Haly, Mr. Noals, a patient, acted as attendant ; heard Isabel say to him, when in a dispute, he had better save his breath to cool his porridge. Some of the female patients called Isabel mother, and so did David Hix when he came in the evening and wanted a female patient to take a walk

with him ; in dead of night, when the moon shone bright, I have heard Hix say, mother ! mother ! I have brought back your daughter ; and the daughter says, mother ! mother ! there is no danger of walking out with such a fine man as Mr. Hix. This was the Hix that helped to bind me when kicked to the chair and bound to it.

#### AFTER NOALS.

William Anderson, attendant, until I left October 13, 1870.

Soon after William came William B. Gibbs went home, and I was placed in the north-east room that Gibbs left, where I lodged until I left.

In this room I remained at least four years. I was a great sufferer from rheumatism in the stomach, much soreness and often raising blood ; faint and weak ; away from home and friends. But, says one, did not the attendant care for you ? I ask, what can one man do for twelve patients, by night and by day, even if he was well disposed.

In this room were from three to six beds,

from 1867 to '71, occupied by white and black, old and young. Should I attempt to fully describe every transaction that occurred in this room within the four years, a volume as large as this would not contain it. I will give a few names of persons over whom William Anderson was attendant in this room. I will relate a few transactions that occurred.

Myself, Ned Buel, Kirk Hull, William Jefferson, John P. Bacon.

I have talked with many country physicians since I left the asylum, and they generally believe that patients in Troy Asylum are all well cared for. But doctors are mistaken, and the public are deceived, and the poor incurable ones, and others, have to suffer wrongfully.

Troy Lunatic Asylum is like a whited sepulchre without, but within is full of dead men's bones; and I say to county doctors, do not recommend such an institution, neither blow for them longer, until a reform is brought about, for you know not who the fire burns in those secret chambers.

## SUFFERINGS OF WM. JEFFERSON, A LUNATIC.

After Jefferson had been bound in bed all night Anderson loosed him and told him to get up. The negro refused; attendant drew the clothes immediately off him, the darkey leaped from the bed, though hands bound with cuffs, AA, and belt, B, grabbing the vessel from under his bed, threw it at the attendant's head, missed his game, hit the door and broke the vessel. Attendant drew the door shut and was gone for a time and I trembled in fear, lying in bed.

Presently came Anderson with the magdalen, Isabella, and a male bully from the main house entering the room where I was, pounced upon the negro, and, after a long tussle, brought him to the floor, and whilst the two held and bound his feet together with strap, B, the magdalen Isabella was pounding his shins with a broom handle and saying, "'tis his shins that want it," another strap, B, being noosed around the one that fastened his legs together, Isabella hitched a ginny, or her hands, to the strap and started

for the door, dragging the poor lunatic out of my sight by his heels and in all probability down two flights of stairs to the bath-room, as may be judged by what is yet to come.

SECOND SUFFERINGS OF WM. JEFFERSON, THE  
NEGRO.

Again, one morning as I was lying in bed having just finished my breakfast and placed the heavy coffee bowl on the stand, quickly, Jefferson darted across the room, grabbed the bowl and struck me on my head as I was lying in bed, and left, taking a stool went to the next room; did not see him strike Wm. Mine, Mine told me he did. Saw Mine in the poor-house since. Saw Anderson bring the stool out of Mine's room; inch and a half plank bottom split in two. Saw Anderson dress Mine's wounded head. By this time Jefferson was back with me, Anderson pulled the self-locking door and I was locked in with the crazy negro.

Come in doctors, the lunny negro will not hurt you, come in doctors, and give me a

cup of cold water; you say I am incurable, I say I am faint. Come in, doctors, the negro won't hurt you, his lunny mind is turned another way; he stands with a drawn mop, this side the door, ready to meet his foes. At this moment came Anderson with two main house bully fighters. Slam, bang, open came the door and in came the attendant with his two fighters pouncing upon the negro and jammed him down on a bed near where I lay, whilst one, not weighing less than two hundred pounds, grasped both hands in the negro's hair, held him tight to the bed. In the meantime the second one (who had helped bind him previously) pounded him in the face until the blood streamed from his nose and mouth. "Now," says Anderson, who had strapped his feet together whilst they were pounding him, "let him up," instantly drawing him bodily to the floor.

Now he lays bleeding on the floor, and now they raise him upon his feet, and place on his hands muff E. The lunatic being

bound, hand and foot, was taken out of my sight.

After a time I saw him lying on the floor bound as described, with the exception of his feet; wet from head to foot; gasping for breath. Come in doctors, the lunatic is cured, he can't hurt you; come in, father, your son won't hurt you; come in, mother, and fan your fainting son; pray, come one and all, make up minds to keep your unfortunate ones from lunatic asylums.

KIRK HULL, OF BERLIN.

Kirk Hull was an orphan boy, some sixteen or seventeen years of age, of a slender constitution; was subject to falling fits,—have seen him have many—falling prostrate on the floor, bruising his head and face till the blood ran down his brow; frothing and bleeding at the mouth, with his hands fastened in muff E. I have seen Anderson put the whole of the asylum harness on him, and lay him on his back in bed and bind him to the bedstead on either side, stretching his legs to the foot, and then fast with the feet

straps to the foot of the bedstead, lying in such a torturing state night after night, and week after week. He was cured of fits in the Marshall Lunatic Asylum, Ida Hill, Troy; N. B., not by medical skill, but from torture and such maltreatment. The orphan died in the darkness of night, with no one to smooth his dying pillow, or wipe the cold sweat from his brow. Lying as I was, within two feet of the orphan's body, sleep departed from my eyes till morning, when in came Anderson with the dead board. Bacon, Noals, Anderson and another carried him from my sight.

## REMARKS.

When I ask the husband to keep his lunny wife with him at Hoosic Falls, he says, "I cannot take care of her." When I pray a sister who has her thousands to keep her foolish sister from Ida Hill Lunatic Asylum, she says, "I can't take care of her." (What! not better than Kirk was cared for?)

## CHAPTER VII.

JOHN P. BACON, OF LANSINGBURGH.

Bacon is wronged, being held a slave to hard labor.

First saw Bacon in Ida Hill Lunatic Asylum, March 29, 1860, bound to a chair in the hall near the dead-house; heard visitors say to him, "how old are you Johnny?" "Eighteen," says he.

I was removed from the main house to the incurable one July 3, 1862. Soon after this he was brought to the same, where he now is, in 1874.

JOHN P. BACON'S TREATMENT AND SUFFERINGS  
BY WILLIAM ANDERSON.

After Anderson came to the incurable house as attendant, Bacon roomed with me most of the time, until I left in 1870, and lodged within three feet of my bed. Here I became intimately acquainted with him. In his childhood he had the advantages of the sabbath school; could say the Lord's prayer, and repeat many passages of Scrip-

ture correctly, and, in all probability, was a mild-tempered, well-disposed boy, until he was led away and tempted by the opposite sex, as many of the young and rising generation are before they are aware of the danger. Bacon was a great sufferer from self-abuse. Behold, what a great fire a little matter kindleth! He became ferocious, uneasy and discontented, unable to govern his mind and person. He was sent to Utica Asylum; from thence to where he suffered under the hands of William Anderson and others in the incurable house of the Troy Asylum.

#### ANDERSON.

Anderson is a man about six feet high, well proportioned, of uncommon muscular power. He told me with his own mouth, in 1870, he had been in the Troy lunatic asylum sixteen years and had not slept out of the institution one night. (Think you he entered as a patient? I do.) He has been kept as attendant and bully fighter many years. He was married to Isabella, the magdalen attendant, and when united it seemed as though

there was nothing so daring or cruel at times that they could not do. And yet, when my wife came, they seemed so nice and talked so soft it seemed that butter would not melt in their mouths, as the old saying is.

The devil says many fine things to bring about his designs and purposes, so do his children. The Lord keep me from such a government as the incurable house of the Troy lunatic asylum, and all others that I know any thing about.

But to my revelation. Bacon's sufferings under Wm. Anderson's cruel hand.

As I have stated, Bacon lodged within three feet of me, and that for more than three years, bound every night but one, some times one way, and sometimes another, with the asylum harness.

Bacon was required to work like a slave under a cruel master, at almost all kinds of work, from the wheelbarrow to the dirty work of the chambers, and one winter, night after night and week after week, at a late hour, he came to the room so wet his

shirt would have frozen if exposed to frost. What now? Anderson puts on his wrists cuffs, AA, and muff, E, then runs strap, B, through staples that are in A and A, locking it around his body, as seen in the engraving, then binds him in bed.

LATER. ANDERSON AGAIN. HABIT A STRONG POWER.

I have seen Bacon at bed-time place on his own wrists cuffs A and A and stand by his bed waiting for Anderson to come and put on the remainder of the harness and bind him in bed.

Again, I have seen Anderson many a time whip him upon his naked flesh, with strap B, till his flesh was red as a piece of raw beef, and harnessed and put him to bed as heretofore. But, says one, as did another to me, perhaps he needed whipping. God forbid! No more ought a lunatic to be whipped, or abused, than the fond mother's infant child that creeps to and paddles in the water-pail, carelessly left by her upon her nice carpet.

When I last visited the kitchen of the

incurable house in 1874 Bacon was eating breakfast from off a coal-bin. He is no more lunny, but kept as a slave to do drudgery for the benefit of the stockholders of the institution at the expense of tax payers in the county of Rensselaer, if I am rightly informed.

ONE OF THE MANY SUFFERINGS OF GENERAL  
SCHUYLER, OF WEST TROY.

The General was some seventy years of age; a man of wealth; lived an unmarried life; to all appearance a man of bad habits. I think his sins had found him out. He was kept by his respected friends for a long time, at length his guardian paid \$10 per week for his board in the Troy Asylum. He died one night in an adjoining room to mine before I left.

I saw him bound at bed-time one night with the accursed harness, and lashed to the bed, his feet being drawn to the foot round and made fast; and as the door was soon to be locked, he exclaims: "Mr. Anderson! Mr. Anderson! how long are you going to keep

me here? "All night," says Anderson. "Water! water!" "Can't have any," says Anderson; and locks the door, and leaves the General in bonds.

ISABEL'S TREATMENT TO MALE AND FEMALE  
PATIENTS.

Isabel, the magdalen woman, could not only bind old men and women, but the young and strong.

I saw her walk up to a young man by the name of Patrick Donahue; put on to him the asylum harness. Isabel might have been the devil, for aught I know, that Donahue was trying to get away from her when he leaped from the window of the third story; as he said when asked why he did so, "*I was trying to get away from the devil.*"

Again I saw this wonderful female come to the men's hall with a shirt in her hand; laid hold of Patrick Fitzgerald, a young man; stripped off his clothes to his shirt, and put on him a skirt. There was no shame in her; there was no part of a lady in her.

TREATMENT OF THE PATIENT CALLED AUNTA BY  
ISABEL.

Aunta worked in the dining-room through the day.

Saw Isabel put on Aunta's night-dress, and that consisted of the asylum harness; then saw Isabel go down stairs night after night with her, saying to put her in a crib or lock-up. Q. Is not this slavery in the first degree?

ISABEL'S CRUEL TREATMENT AGAINST MISS  
LAWN.

I first saw Miss Lawn in the short hall from the head of the stairs; appeared pleasant and sociable; days passed and I again saw her, but she was much disfigured; she had lost her beautiful head of hair; appeared to be in trouble on that account; talked much about it; months passed on, and I saw her hands bound with the muff, E; not long after saw her with the whole of the harness on, walking in the hall below me, where I first saw her.

Next, to add to her torture, Isabel, the

magdalen attendant, fastened her to a window bar in the south hall, where the sun, with all its meridian heat, beamed in upon her.

Many has been the time since I left the incurable house in 1870, I have visited it merely to ferret out what I could for the benefit of others, taking minutes in my diary.

Learned of Wm. Anderson that, in 1873, Miss Lawn, Bridget Hamilton, Walis and others, to the amount of twenty-two, considered incurable, had been sent to the western part of New York State to a State Lunatic Asylum. The Lord have mercy upon them.

The first year I entered the Troy Asylum, I found in the attendant's room a circular containing the by-laws of the Institution. To me, when I read it, there did not appear to be any thing objectionable; the attendants were required to treat their patients kindly. But who knows they do? Does these twenty-six Governors, under whose direction is this Institution? If not, they come short, and will be held amenable at the judgment.

An institution is an institution, and a kingdom is a kingdom.

And when the righteous are in authority the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule the people mourn.

There is a chapel in the main house of the institution where prayer is wont to be made. But what is that to one shut out, more than the passing look of the priests and levites who passed by the wounded man who went from Jerusalem down to Jericho and fell among thieves; so I fell among thieves on Ida Hill and was wounded and passed by.

I shall now leave this part of my narrative and speak briefly of the Vermont State Lunatic Asylum at Brattleborough, and the treatment of a few of the inmates.

BRATTLEBOROUGH ASYLUM, VT. MY RIDE TO  
BRATTLEBOROUGH ASYLUM.

In 1843 I visited the Vermont asylum, and little did I then think that in 1859 I should have to pass through the iron gate leading from Dr. Rockwell's office and be shut up with thirty-six lunatics in the third

story of that asylum. "Be ye also ready, for ye know not what a day brings forth."

August 29, 1859, I was partly persuaded by my friends and in part compelled, by others, to go to Brattleborough asylum to undergo a course of medical treatment. From this time up to 1870 no person saw a smile on my countenance. In addition to my own spiritual troubles and weakness of body, to be snatched from my home and locked in with such a crew was enough to break one's heart or make many crazy.

The day was warm and fine; had a fine shower. After brother B. and myself were seated in the vehicle in came Esq. Warren who volunteered his services. Weak as I was I had no pains or aches until they were brought on by the treatment I received in the asylums. We rode forty miles the first day, the Esquire kindly holding a shade over me to keep off the heat of the sun. Going through Bennington, soon we arrived at the top of the Green mountain, where I laid down waiting for refreshment in the Fox hotel, in the neighborhood where I preached

in the summer of 1841, while attending school at Bennington. Paul verily thought he was doing God's service when he was persecuting the church; his mind changed. After trying to serve the Lord many years I verily thought I should be forever lost, and was unhappy ten years and more. A mistake is no sin, though we suffer by it. But to my story; after we left the hotel we proceeded slowly onward, and when the heavens blackened and the rain descended, we hauled into a barn by the wayside. After the shower we continued our journey onward, and, as is common to nature, the esquire had occasion to leave the wagon; we halted. Here, I thought, was a chance to elope and shun the dreaded asylum, but my better judgment forbade it on account of the weakness of my body, and I sat in the wagon. After the esquire returned we made our way onward and arrived in a village some eight or ten miles from Brattleborough. Here, in the hotel, we staid. Supper being over, I was shown to my bed by my guides and the landlord who says "I

sleep under this room, if any thing is wanting." Two beds in the room, the esquire pushed his against the door. I lay with B., did not sleep sound; was not a strong believer in dreams, but here I saw, in a vision or dream, the bottomless pit, as I thought, while unconscious of all else around me. The unbeliever may argue, there is no place of torment "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," but Christ told his disciples to say, "he that believeth not shall be damned."

#### WHAT I SAW IN MY VISION DESCRIBED.

Here, as I was lying within a few miles of the great and popular institution, Vermont asylum, here I saw an awful pit below. Naught but the inner side did I see; it was made of fire-brick as it appeared to me, round at the top, broad as the eye could extend, the depth was the same as the breadth at the top, running to a point below. Cast one beast into such a pit and where is the bottom for his foot? Fill this to the brim and one torments the other. I awoke from

my visionary state and the sun was shining through the window from the east. Soon I was on my way to that earthly hell, Vermont asylum, similar to the Troy asylum, that place of torment and slave depot.

Soon I entered the doctor's office; soon he grabbed my hat with his heavy paw says, "take off your hat"; soon came John White into the doctor's office says, "come," taking me by the arm, and locked me in the third story with thirty-six beast-like men, while tears gushed from my streaming eyes.

I shall say but little of my treatment, let it suffice to say, the worst I was used was from attendant White, he kicked me severely when I was a little too slow to suit him when walking out. This I had to do with some two hundred men, bull-dogs and attendants, with clubs in hand. Here, I contracted the catarrh and rheumatism by his showering me with cold water in the month of November, night after night.

On this hall I became acquainted with Atkins, whom I have designated as the lunatic barber. I will name a few others on this hall;

Atkins, Mircells, an old man; a boy called Mecheum, Joel Swain, a Mr. Reed, John Eycleshymer, from Pittstown.

In this hall I was kept during the four months, lodged in the south-east room with from two to three patients, with thirty-six on the hall through the day.

SUFFERINGS OF MECHEUM THE BOY. PROVERBS.

My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee, that they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.

Unto you, O men! I call, and my voice is to the sons of man.

Oh, ye simple, understand wisdom, and ye foolish, be ye of an understanding heart.

Mecheum came to the asylum after I entered it, roomed with me, was showered in cold water till he became like a skeleton, sat beside me at the table, sometimes refused to eat; attendant pulled his hair at the table to make him eat, and caused a running sore; saw his wound dressed.

If Mecheum, Bacon, Scott and other young

persons whom I have seen in lunatic asylums, had shunned their seducers, they might have been rejoicing in health, and shunned the fires of an asylum hell.

My opportunity to know the secret workings of this institution was limited, only four months stay; not being changed from house to house and room to room as in the Troy asylum. I know we had small potatoes and cheap food. Asylums are asylums.

#### THE YOUNG MR. REED

Roomed on another hall; knew but little of his treatment, but I know he was showered as severely as Mecheum; became pale and poor; could barely walk to his room after pouring four pails of cold water on his head, no alternative, the rattan lay above his head, and he in the hands of his attendant and J. White.

#### JOEL SWAIN.

Joel was a young man some twenty-two years of age; he was peaceable and quiet; assisted White to lead a blind man and scrubbing the floor. He once made a wooden

false key to our room. I asked if he expected to get out: "Yes, some time," said he, "I am going back there some time, if the Lord will." The attendant made a mistake, and kept one of my shirts, sending one marked Joel Swain. Swain is not Swan, yet a Swan may be a little goosey.

JOHN EYCLESHYMER, OF PITTSTOWN.

Eycleshymer came to the asylum in 1859; think he might justly be classed with those spoken of without the kingdom. His habits were bad, and, no doubt, were the cause of his being in this lunatic hell.

For me to undertake to describe this asylum fully would be useless; to say the least it is a monster, and answers to the bottomless pit, I saw in my vision; beneath my window was a pit or yard, with from fifteen to twenty men; some bound; some up, and some down; some with naught but their shirt, and some with none—burnt to the quick by the rays of the sun. In this asylum hell I learn, by hearsay, there were five hundred patients, besides the bull-dog. I sup-

pose the club attendants were reckoned in the number, at least the lunatic barber was, most assuredly.

The first night in this asylum I watered my couch with my tears, groaning with groans that could not be uttered; naught but air to encircle in my arms, and no dear wife, thought I, to smooth my pillow.

During my four months' stay at Brattleborough, my only friend, W. Robertson, visited me, and I whispered in his ear and told him they were killing me, and I wanted to go home. On the 29th of November Brother B. came, while tears of joy and sorrow were streaming from both my eyes. He asked me if I would like to go home. We were soon seated in the coach, and up we rise the Green mountain, and we stopped for the night; and now we are seated in a cutter; and now we are at the Fox Hotel, again waiting for refreshments; and now the 30th I am at Brother B.'s at bed-time; and now at home, sweet home, November, 1859; there is no place like home! In this asylum I was a private patient, my wife and

brother paid \$2 per week; in Troy Asylum the county paid \$5 per week, if I am rightly informed. If Brattleborough Institution made \$1 per week on my board, what did the stock company of the Troy Asylum make keeping me and others on shank beef more than nine years in the incurable house.

1. I answer, they wrong tax payers.

2. They wrong the poor.

Lastly, they wrong themselves.

Money is the root of all evil, and I fear the prayers of many stockholders connected with lunatic asylums are like the prayers of an aged doctor in Vermont, who said to me, in times of health: "I wish there were more sick." Said I: "Doctor, don't pray for me."

#### TROY LUNATIC ASYLUM INCURABLE HOUSE.

In this house I lay more than nine years, like persons at home; many a time nigh unto death.

In the summer of 1870, I had a long fit of sickness. My wife, my brother B., and brother J. were sent for, and informed I could not live long. During this sickness I

was very weak ; and, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, my bowels became indisposed, and moved not for thirty-two days. I was under the treatment of Dr. Lomax. As the cool weather came on, I finally recovered. As I gradually grew strong in body, my mind strengthened. The cloud that hung o'er my mind, during my captivity, gradually disappeared. The sweet singing of the birds was again music to my ears. All nature, which had been shrouded in darkness to me, seemed now to praise the great Creator and gladden my heart. After O'Donnell destroyed the Bible in the main house, familiar passages of Scripture seemed to rush upon my mind as though I was reading them. I will give one. Rev. chap. ii, verse 17: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Most of all, this verse seemed to encourage me. My spirits revived, and not a cloud has

gathered o'er my mind since. I became talkative, cheerful, and happy. After I had been in the asylum more than ten years, without having an almanac, in 1870, I gave the steward a note with the exact time I entered to a day, saying it would be ten years and six months the 29th of September, and that is to-morrow. I never lost time but once, to my knowledge. I always tried to remember what day of the week the month came in on, then I could say thirty days hath September, and so on, as my mother learnt me when a boy.

After I was delivered from the spiritual mistake, and happy, I sought every opportunity to reason with Dr. Lomax, knowing I must show myself a sane man in his judgment, or stay in the asylum. Previous to this, I did not talk with the doctor. I began on Scripture reasoning, for here my mind ran from a boy. He is a Greek scholar. I asked him if Emmanuel was a Greek word. I asked some other Scripture questions. After a time, he waived the subject, saying he was a doctor; I must ask some clergyman. We

had some pleasant interviews, but I perceived he wanted me to do the talking, and that upon pleasing temporal matters, such as telling anecdotes. This I could do, for I was jovial as a hungry pig squealing for his dinner. I mind one. A Dutchman, who had spent a fortune by intemperance, after which becoming a good and temperate man, says: "I know more than any Dutchman in town." "How is that?" says doctor or Haunse, who were standing by. "Can't you furstawn, Haunse? I have found out that I am a fool."

Again, a funny joke on the doctor. Going into his office: "Good morning, doctor," said I. "Doctor, do you know where I can get a calve's rennet or a cod-fish to grease my hair?" I asked the doctor how he found me, when I first began to talk with him. He said: "Reasonable." Brother B. has come for me, this 13th day of October, 1870. "Good-bye, doctor; I'm going home — I'm going home."

## CHAPTER VIII.

SINCE I LEFT TROY LUNATIC ASYLUM AS A  
PATIENT.

More than three years have elapsed since I left the asylum, yet I have often visited it within that time, taking a survey with diary and pen in hand, minuting down names of persons, localities and transactions, to refresh my mind in this direction that I might be better prepared to do justice to my God, the People and myself while wielding the pen in this great and awful disclosure, not forgetful to implore aid from that spirit which guides into all truth.

Since I left the asylum I have availed myself of books written by different authors who have been shut up in lunatic asylums, whose disclosures correspond with the facts herein set forth in regard to the treatment of patients.

Rev. H. Chase penned out two years and four months of his asylum life spent in Utica asylum. I believe it was an oversight in his friends in sending him there. The Reverend

remarks that he is not aware that anybody in or out of the church looks upon him otherwise than before he went to the institution. I would be glad if I could have as much charity as the Reverend. But I have no confidence in the flesh; since I left the asylum my reputation has been encroached upon by the slanderer's tongue, by magistrate, by the foreman in the great mowing machine shop at Hoosick Falls, by grandfathers, behind my back, before children, who have said to me, "Grand Pa says that you are crazy, and asks when are you going back to the asylum."

Let those slanderers know we have as much feeling as a toad, and try to become gentlemen.

Before I went to the asylums as a patient I was totally ignorant of the character and secret workings of these popular institutions. I was also totally ignorant and understood not the different modes and operations practiced in sending patients to insane or lunatic asylums.

LAW, AND DIFFERENT MODES PRACTICED IN  
SENDING PATIENTS TO LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

I learned from ex-Judge Robertson and others the law to send a patient to a lunatic asylum. Two physicians examine the patient, pronounce him or her insane, by oath; the county judge being notified to this effect, issues an order and the patient is sent to the smutmill of hell or to a lunatic asylum.

It must not be understood that the same mode of operation is practiced in all cases. Some patients are supported in the Troy institution solely by the county; while others by the patient himself or herself, for instance, as General Schuyler, whose guardian paid \$10 per week for his board, he died in an adjoining room to me, fared no better than Bacon and others (property sold since for \$20,000).

I entered the Brattleborough institution as a private; it was not necessary to consult doctors, judges or jurors; I was a husband; Brother B. gave bonds for security; I heard him call for them, and saw the doctor hand

them to him before we left; suppose it to have been a wife or a child, it would have been all the same. When Brother B. came for me to go home from the Troy Asylum, October 13, 1870, we met Steward Harrison. I asked him for my trunk and clothing, but have not as yet obtained it. I shall ask once more. Oh! how much I needed my overcoat in the cold fall and winter after I got home, going to and from my shop; I well remember what my wife and daughter said after cordially greeting me, "We don't expect you to do any thing; thought I, these feeble women can't support me and themselves with the needle," and I, joking, said to encourage them, "You will see me coming up this hill, with a half barrel of flour on my back" (at the time a pail of water was all I could carry up stairs); sure enough, before January, I surprised my family by sending up the hill a barrel of flour and 160 pounds of pork, besides many other necessities; these I earned working upon my knees part of the time, and they did not set us back, but came good when I lay sick in

January and February, 1872, nigh unto death with inflammation of the lungs; but thanks be to the great Giver, in that sickness I had a beloved wife to smooth my pillow, and an affectionate daughter to administer the necessary cordials.

My daughter writes as follows, before I left the asylum :

PITTSOWN, *September 23, 1870.*

MY DEAR FATHER,— I received your letter, and was pleased to hear you are better. I will write you a few lines to let you know what we intend to do about having you come home. We are intending to have you come home when Dr. Lomax says you are well enough and can, and when you come home we will try to make home as pleasant as we can, so try to keep up good courage. Please write if you feel able.

This from your affectionate daughter,  
MARTHA A. SWAN.

A WORD TO THE PEOPLE. PROVERBS 22, 23.

Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom and instruction, and understanding.

For a description of my heart-felt sorrow during those ten years of my captivity, read Psalm 22.

To know my joys and hopes since the cloud passed off, that hung so heavily, long over my mind, read Psalm 23.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

"If any one knoweth how to appreciate the blessedness of liberty and good society, I more."

"The kingdom of heaven is with men; but without, are dogs and liars, and sorcerers and whoremongers, and he that willeth and maketh a lie."

"Seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you."

"The Lord God is a sun and a shield, for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house

of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

To prevent any person going to a lunatic asylum as patient wrongfully, I recommend:

1st. That the complainant be required to summon each physician in said town where the defendant lives, these being duly sworn after having examined the accused or defendant in regard to his sanity or insanity.

2d. That this examination be in presence of twelve legal unprejudiced jurors who shall weigh the testimony and decide accordingly in regard to his being a proper subject of a lunatic asylum.

3d. That the defendant or accused, like Paul before Felix, be permitted to answer for him or herself.









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